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THE McCOMAS SAGA

A Family History down to the Year 1950

Compiled by

HENRY CLAY McCOMAS

assisted by

MARY WINONA McCOMAS

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McComas, Henry Clay Comp.
The McComas saga; a family history down to the year 1950. [Baltimore] 1950.
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1.McComas family. I.Title. II.McComas,Mary Winona Co-Comp.

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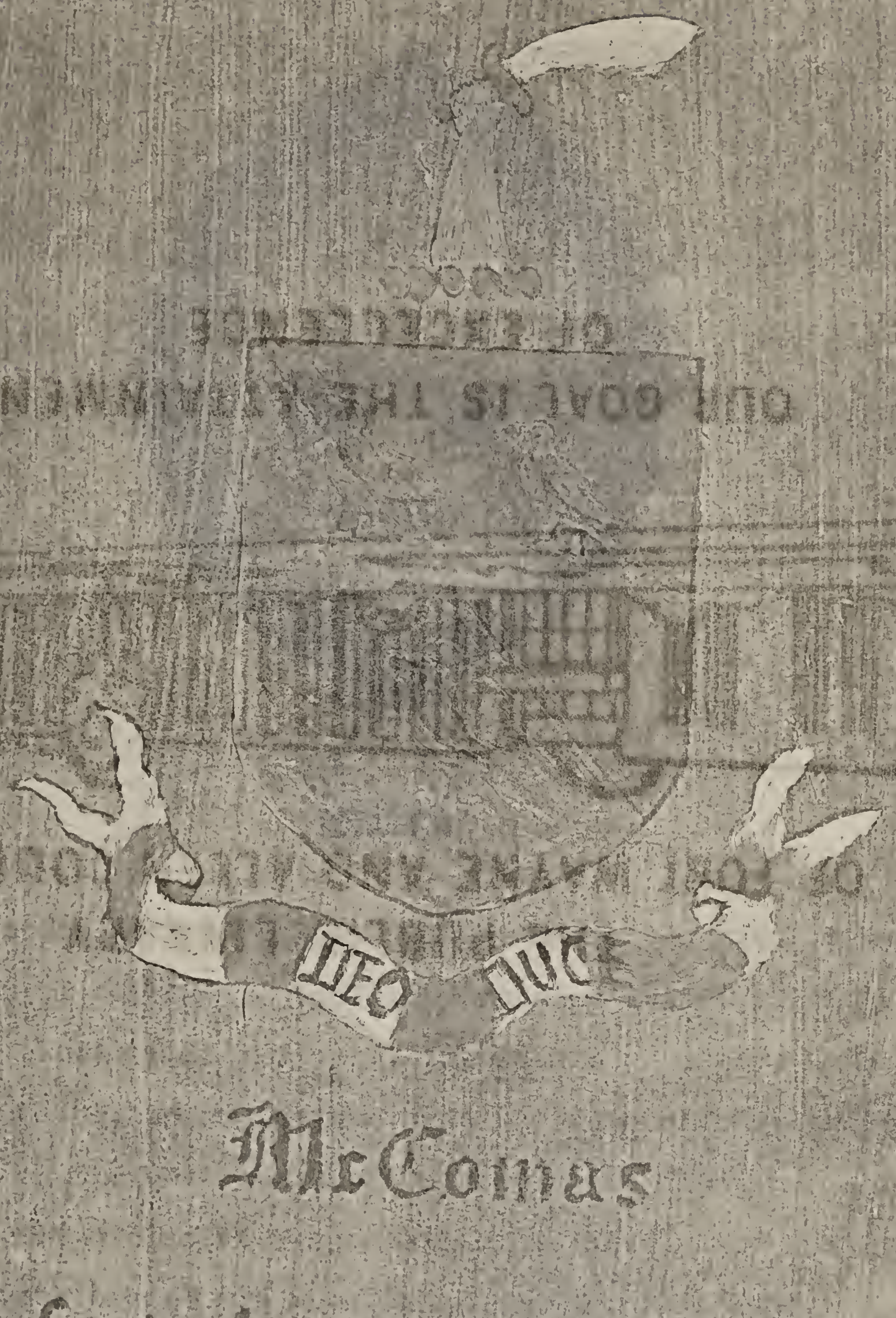
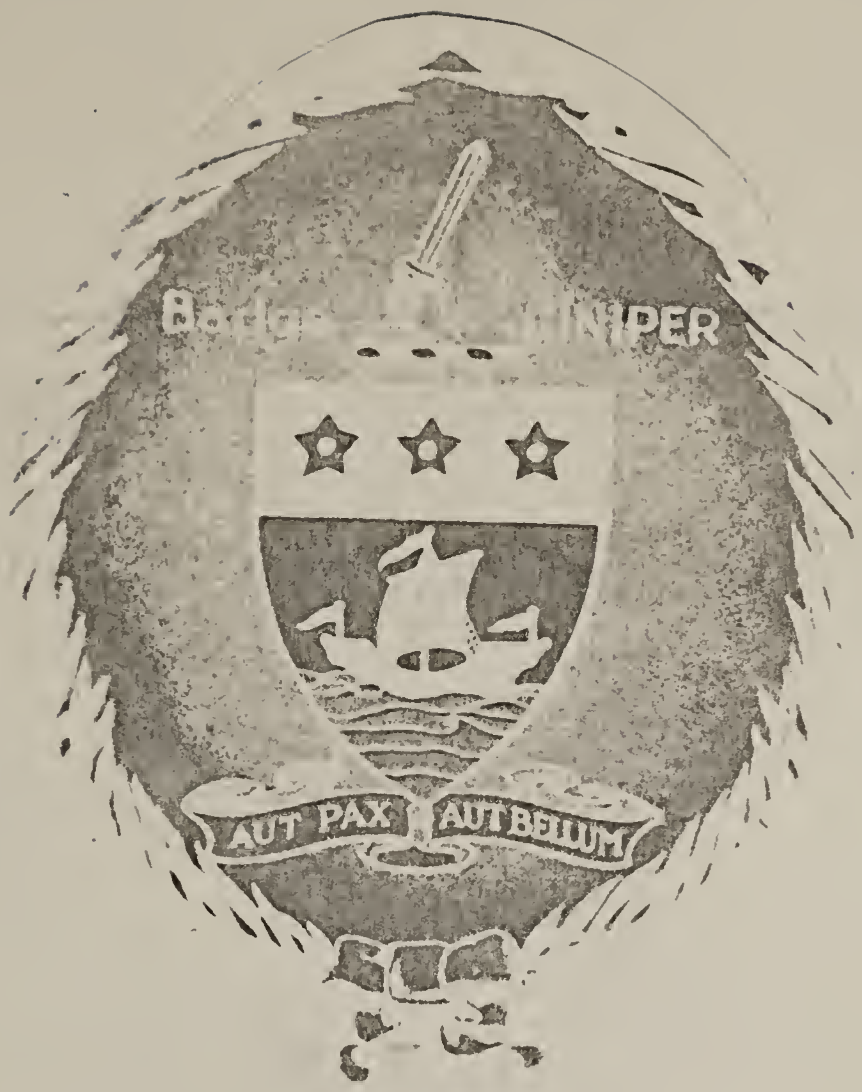


McComas

Coat of arms of the McComas division of the Gunn clan which originated from the Norse Vikings who settled in the Scotch Highlands in the nineth century.



GUNN

In the year 1100 A.D., Olaus Rolfi, a Norse nobleman and Governor of Caithness, Scotland, married Aslief, Countess of Athole. Their children were, Ingridus (daughter), Gunn and Sweyn. Later, Sweyn was known as the famous Freswick Pirate. Gunn settled on the west coast of Caithness, at Ulbster. Like others of the ruling classes, he retained his given name and his descendants became the Scottish Highland clan, Gunn.

Gunn undoubtedly established himself as a Viking, obtaining his wealth by forays on neighboring or distant people. This could have given rise to the unique coat of arms.

The Gunns were the most warlike clan in northern Scotland. The motto, "Aut Pax Aut Bellum" (Either Peace or War) seems to have expressed their attitude toward the world.

The Gunn Clan was made up of 27 "septs", or divisions. One of these was named "MacComas". (Calder's History of Caithness)

M129

Maryland Historical Society anno 1844

GIFT OF
DR. H. C. Mc COMAS
JANUARY 1951

MAR 29 1950

INTRODUCTION

Two ideas have been with me all the time that I have been gathering this material for a family history. The first was to get all the facts possible about each individual and the second was to sketch in an historical background, so that the individual would not seem to be an effigy with a label "McComas" on him, but rather a human being living among his fellows. Without a background to give perspective it is impossible to tell whether a figure in the foreground is large or small.

Two other ideas have been involved in this family history. I have been hoping that each member of the family, who takes one of these "Sagas", will cherish it and add to it. For a generation the old family Bible with its family Record has passed away. It is my hope that the Saga may become a record of the births, marriages and deaths,- and other items in the careers of those whom we love and like to remember. For this reason the Saga is in a loose-leaf cover. In the last chapter, "1950", there are many items you can enter about members of the family whose lives are more familiar to you than to me.

The last of the four persisting ideas may seem a bit fanciful. It is my hope that someone of these Sagas may go down your family line to the year 2050 A.D. Then another McComas may take up the history and launch it forth for another century.

I may say to this descendant that he can check on my history in the National Archives in Washington; the Hall of Records, Annapolis, Md.; the Court Records in Baltimore and Belair, Md. I hope he will not find many mistakes. Some of these old records are tricky.

In writing a book the author naturally thinks of the people who may read it. As I wrote these chapters I had in mind the grandchildren of the old sea captain who went around Cape Horn in the smallest ship to make that hazardous trip up to his time, in 1852. Then, from them, my imagination turned to their children and to the still younger ones who keep sprouting out on the family tree. This rather vague group of readers, I had in mind when I used the pronouns "you" and "we".

The question naturally arises; why trace your family line back 250 years to the Scotch Highlander, who first came to America, when so many generations lie between you and him? Have there not been so many other stocks entering in to the family line that today only about a hundredth part of old Daniell Maccomus would be represented in his descendants? That does not seem to be the case. The modern science of Genetics shows that the germ plasm, which carries the hereditary traits, is not like a chemical compound that may be made up by adding all sorts of other chemicals It is an elaborately organized plasm carrying specific types of chromosomes, which in turn carry very definite and distinct genes. It is the combination of the gene of a father with the gene of a mother that determines the structures in their offspring. One gene may dominate another with the result that a son or a daughter resembles the father, or the mother, in some characteristic feature. A group of dominating genes may produce a son who is the "spitting image" of his father. These ultramicroscopic genes are assigned the job of giving the characteristics to such very small structures as the lens of the eye and the iris. Some gene (with a sense of humor) produced the "Hapsburg lip", a large hanging lip that showed

on the face of Alphonso XIII of Spain and on back to his ancestors in the 15th century. Now that is twice the length of time required to bring some genes from our Daniell to ourselves.

Some genes are "recessive". They recede from appearance for one or more generations and suddenly reappear. Of course, there does appear to be a fusion of two genes when a black and a white person marry and when their children are mulattoes. The genes nevertheless maintain their identity; for a pure black, or a pure white, may arise from the cross marrying of the mulattoes.

So what may we infer? Some of the genes that our generation is carrying have maintained their identity clear back to the Maccomuses that shivered in their kilts in the Highlands of Scotland! The genes that determine the character of the brain and the nature of the endocrines are responsible for our intelligence and our personality. Should they be akin to those Daniell Mccomus carried, then the thoughts and feelings he had when he bought his farm in 1687 and looked from it out on the blue waters of the Severn River would be just about those you and I would entertain in his circumstances and position.

Whatever we may think of heredity and however intriguing it may be to imagine oneself back in the years of our forebears there is another reason for turning our thoughts to them.

When they carried a coat of arms with them from the Old Country they were thinking not only of the generations past but of those to come.

They said, and we must believe them, that they had the coming generations in mind when they entered the armies for our freedom.

They thought of us. It is only becoming that sometimes we should think of them.

IN SCOTLAND

Our narrative begins over a thousand years ago. The McComas line is woven in with the Gunn Clan and the progenitor of that line was Gunnius, or Gunn, brother of Sweyn, the celebrated Freswich pirate. He was banished from the Orkney Islands for intriguing against Earl Harold, and crossed over to Ulbster in Caithness, Scotland. There he succeeded in building such a family and fortune in the parish of Wick that he was called the "Great".

From scanty Scotch and English records and the old Norse Sagas, it appears that the Norse began occupying the more fertile parts of Scotland as early as 870 A. D. and their influence persisted until a treaty was made with Norway in 1266, - so says James Gray in his "Sutherland and Cathness in Saga-time". He adds, "Yet another family of Norse and Viking lineage, which was settled in Orkney from the earliest Norse times and afterwards in Caithness and Sutherland, was that of the Gunns, who were descended in the male line from Sweyn Asfeifarson the great Viking-"

We know that the Gunn Clan stretched from Wick along the Watten Water to its source in Loch Watten, a distance of some ten miles and that before they spread into Cathness and Sutherland their tribal acres were bounded by this ten mile stream as a base and a sort of triangle ranging from two to ten miles northward. Later, as they spread, they filtered into Cathness, a province about thirty miles by thirty, in irregular shape.

Today it is thus described: "The surface generally is flat and tame, consisting for the most part of barren moors, almost destitute of trees. It presents a gradual slope from the north and east up to the heights in the south and west". Here, the chief mountains rise only some two thousand feet. Today, there is a considerable number of large farms in the fertile areas that succeed in getting good crops of oats, barley, potatoes and beans. The grazing lands supply large flocks of Cheviot Sheep, whose wool is in demand, also horses and cattle. However, it should be added, that this prosperity is peculiar to the present age, that allows a farmer a long lease on the land he rents, so he can afford to spend money and effort on his acres. In ancient times that was not so. The leases were short and the tenure of land was most precarious. The individual was not encouraged to make the best of what natural resources there were.

His chief battle, however, was not with Nature but with his fellow man.

The enormous pressure from population growth in Europe reached to the northernmost parts of Scotland. Long before Christ, the hardy Iberians migrated into the country and settled. Then came the fiery Celts and Gaels, then the fierce Picts, then the fighting Scots. Add all of these together and season the mass with a liberal supply of Norse Vikings and you really have a pretty pugnacious people.

All ancient people waged frequent wars and many battles but the Scots from Viking times till Cromwell filled in the periods between wars and battles with innumerable impromptu feuds

and exciting forays into their neighbors lands. From the Sagas and stories that have drifted down from that era it would appear that they were enjoying themselves.

Undoubtedly their fighting was due to something more than the love of excitement. Consider our remote ancestor, Gunnius, comfortably settled in the little port of Ulbster where he could indulge in Viking piracy and plunder, he waxed wealthy and fathered a considerable family. How wealthy we cannot guess, but we may guess about his family. Our first ancestors in America produced from 8 to 12 children in a generation. In a century, if the children lived there would be about 1000 in the family. If the ancient Scots followed that pattern it would not be possible to fit them in to that little strip of Highlands between Loch Watten and the sea. Naturally they would have to expand over on to their neighbors preserves. Naturally their neighbors would take claymores and try to trim that clan back to size.

In that steady pressure of growing clan against growing clan lies the real secret of the constant strife. Once the fighting started it would carry itself on by the hatreds it engendered. So feuds would start and persist for generations. Such a feud was waged for years between the Gunns and the Keiths. Some of the incidents were sufficiently lurid to find a place in Scotch history. Here are two samples. One Lachlan Gunn of Braemor had an only daughter, Eilidh, whose remarkable beauty gave her a very wide reputation. This interested the Keiths. Dugald Keith gathered a group of his clansmen, swept down on Braemor, killed a number of Gunns, caught the girl and carried her to the castle of Agerkill. She became the victim of her

abductor. In shame and desperation she hurled herself from one of the castle's towers. From then the raids between these clans increased in frequency and intensity. One, at Harpsdale, was of such proportions it has been called a battle. It was bitter and exhausting. This was in the year 1426. About 25 years later George Gunn was chief of the clan. He had quite a castle on the coast at Clyth, 15 miles below Wick, where he enjoyed some real barbaric pomp. He had a nickname through the countryside, based on the enormous silver brooch that fastened his plaid. Like everyone else he was thoroughly tired of the blood letting. So he negotiated with the chief of the Keiths and they agreed to meet at the chapel of St. Tears. This was a spot held in reverence by all of the semi-barbarians. It seems that it was erected in memory of the tears the mothers shed for their babies, when Herod slew them in the hope of killing the coming Christ. At that time this was a most sacred place where they were to confer. Each side was to be represented by 12 men on horseback. From the south came 12 mounted Gunns from the north 12 mounted Keiths; but behind each Keith horseman rode, concealed, an additional warrior. Of course, the Gunns were cut to pieces. George Gunn was slain, stripped of his arms and armour and the famous silver brooch. Now, the Gunns were known through the centuries as "Bonnie Fechters" so the conference was considered adjourned. It was called to order at Drummay by William MacKames, who killed George Keith of Agerkill his sons and ten men. Of course, this did not settle the score. Continual attacks and defenses finally wore the little Gunn clan down so that a number of them went over

into Sutherland. A Sir Robert Gordon wrote in 1618, that the Gunns were a "race of people verie couragious, rather desperat than valient". One historian states "the tribe seems to have inherited in no small measure the Norse berseker nature. What the MacGregors were in the turbulance in the Mid-Highlands, so was the small Gunn clan in the far north".

From F. Adams' very interesting and carefully written book, "The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands", it is possible to learn how and when the name MacComas first appears in the Gunn clan. The chief, George, who was slain at St. Tears, had several sons. "The majority of the Septs (divisions) of the clan Gunn are descendents of George Gunn commonly known as Crowner, or Coroner, who flourished in the 15th Century and his son James .... From James was derived the patronymic of MacJames, or Jameson and all of the following forms are synonomous, or affiliated; Jameson, Jamieson, MacKames, MacComas, MacKaemish and MacOmish". One of the sons Rob, who was killed at St. Tears had descendents, Robson, Robison and MacRob. Another son, slain in the same fight was John. His derivatives are Johnson, Kean, and Keene and MacIan.

It appears that they indicated that they were sons, or descendents, of some chief by prefixing "Mac", or suffixing "Son". So "MacComas" in some way got twisted from "James". However, it was not twisted quite as badly as "MacOmish".

I cannot find out how the MacComases put in their time from the middle of the 15th Century to the time Daniell took up a plantation in Maryland in the latter part of the 17th Century. They must have done something noteworthy to have been entitled to a coat of arms; for it was a statutory offense to

fake them, according to an act of Parliament in 1592. Coats-of-Arms originated from embroidering insignia on the surcoat, which was worn over the metal armor, to distinguish friend from foe in the thick of battle. That would indicate that the MacComases took part in the enterprises of the "Desparet" Gunn Clan.

From the Coat-of-Arms itself it is hard to imagine what its significance might be. The general set-up is that known as the shield "Ordinary and Honorable". The shield has the ordinary characters of the earliest types. It has a "bend" running from the upper right hand to the lower left. This is supposed to represent the shoulder strap of the carrier. If the band should run across the middle of the shield it would be called a "fesse" and it is supposed to depict the ancient warriors military girdle. Such shields are considered quite ordinary in comparison with those containing elaborate quartering and many figures. The birds that appear in the MacComas shield resemble swallows and are known in heraldry as "martlets". When they appear on a Coat-of-Arms they tell a story, - a sad story. The martlet has no feet, only feathers where the feet should be. According to tradition this means that it is the shield of a fourth son who cannot inherit any land, so he does not need any feet to land on. He needs wings to get away from the ancestral lands. It seems that the first son inherited from his father, the second from his mother, the third anything that might be left but the fourth got nothing but the bird. In those early days they had designs that would indicate the rank of each son down to the ninth;

if they had nine sons and some of them did. There was a Scotch custom known as "hand-fasting" or a sort of trial marriage. If no children resulted in twelve months the couple could part and seek new partners. That insured a high birth rate and a vigorous clan.

The crest above the shield is quite a common one. It appears on the shield of the Gunn Clan also.

This Coat-of-Arms may have come over with Daniell Macomus and his sons may have passed it down. Where Daniell had been living in Scotland, is a question. There are MacComases living in Dublin today who have the same Coat-of-Arms. That I learned from a letter recently received from a lady of our name in Ireland. It is a fact that during the years when England was trying to innoculate Ireland with Protestant blood and was sending thousands of English and Scotch people into Northern Ireland that a John MacComas of Scotland migrated to Ireland. Daniell may have come from the branch in Scotland. This is an interesting point and I hope some other members of our family will become interested enough to try to clear it up.

In addition to Coats-of-Arms to give distinction to the separate clans they also had their "tartans". These usually ran to greens and reds with some lines of yellow.

Each clan acquired certain tunes for their pipers, to be used for marching, salutes and laments. The most famous of these is the Campbells' Marching Song, "The Campbells Are Coming". The Gunn Clan had a salute entitled "Failta Nan Guineach". Like the famous feudal lords of England who had certain flowers that they used as a sort of badge (plan-

tagenet, rose, etc.) the Highland clans had their badges. That of the Gunn Clan was a sprig of a juniper bush or rosewood.

Of course, it is not possible to learn exactly what were the conditions social, economic, or political, under which the people of Scotland were living when our forebears went to Ireland or America. G. M. Trevelyan in his history of England has an interesting paragraph on Scotland.

"In 1689 their poverty was in strong contrast to their energy of mind and character. Agricultural methods were Midaeval, even in the rich soil of the Lothians. For want of draining much of the best land lay water-logged and unused. The plow went up barren hill sides. The primaeval forest had disappeared and as yet no modern plantations with hedges or walls broke the monotony of the wind-swept landscape, where the miserable sheep and cattle shivered in the blast. Improvements were impossible because the land was let on very short leases with no security of tenure. Neither lairds nor tenants had money to put into the land and the nobles were interested in their estates chiefly as hunting grounds. The farms had cabins of turf or unmortaced stone, often without windows or a chimney, the door serving for light or ventilation. Beer and oatmeal were a monotonous but a wholesome and sufficient diet, save when bad harvests brought starvation....Nearly half the acreage of what was normally the kingdom of Scotland remained under the tribal rule of mountain chiefs, dwelling outside the law and civilization of English-speaking lands...This poverty stricken population with few political rights and living under social arrangements largely feudal, was more

versed in Biblical knowledge and theological argument, and certainly not less independent in spirit than the well-to-do farmers and shoppers of Parlimentary England".

From such a people as these England could well find recruits who would be glad to migrate to Ireland. We do know that at about this time that the Scotch were very suspicious of the Pope and very much afraid that the Catholic religion under James II might be imposed upon Scotland. The Duke of Argyll led a rebellion from Scotland which was quickly suppressed. Many of the men who took part in that rebellion later came to America. Many of these rebels against the Crown came to Maryland. They were political prisoners. It may be that Daniell knew some of these men and threw his lot in with them.

The items that come down to us from the earliest McComases in Ireland indicate that one John McComas received a farm at Drumsna, County Leitrim, for fighting with William of Orange against James II (see addenda). This dates back to 1700 A.D. He spelled his name in the way that we do today. His descendents have the same coat of arms as ours. Apparently he came to Ireland from Sutherland, Scotland, near Scourie on the Coast. General Hugh McKay's clan lived there and he raised a regiment of Highlanders in that locality. The Gunn Clan's tribal land was just Southeast of Scourie.

ON THE BANKS OF THE SEVERN

From a compilation of a number of documents a list has been made of some 20,859 settlers who came to Maryland before the year 1680. No MacComas appears in the list. The first appearance of the name, so far as I can find, appears in the records which the Lord Proprietor kept of lands surveyed, their acreage, the ground rents imposed, the name of the property (if any), the person owning the land, the agent selling it and the recipient. An entry in this old tome of yellowing pages and exquisite handwriting for the date March 29th, 1687 tells how a Stephen Gill acted as an agent for Thomas Brown in selling 98 acres on the South side of the Severn River, Maryland to Dan'll Maccomus and that the yearly ground rent to be paid to the Lord Proprietor was 3 shillings and one and a quarter pence.

In thumbing through those crisp old pages, Stephen Gill and Thomas Brown take on a little color. Thomas Brown first appears in the Rent Rolls as buying a hundred acres of land on the south side of the Severn in 1651. In 1659 he bought another hundred acres on the south side of the Severn, and a hundred and fifty acres at the head of the River. Then came a period when he began baptizing his property. In 1665 he named some 250 acres on the south side of the Severn "Brown's Encrease" and in the same year another purchase was named "Brown's Folly". After that came "Brown's Peace" in 1676, but the piece was only 52 acres. In 1687 he surveyed a hundred acres on the south side of the Severn and cheerfully

called it "Brown's Chance". That was the piece of land that Daniell took his chance on. In 1695 he quit with what he called "Brown's Forest", some 387 acres.

This much we must conclude, Thomas Brown certainly must have known something about the land on the south side of the Severn River which he had been selling for so many years.

Stephen Gill may have been a friend of the family. Some thirteen years after putting through this deal we find a court record which reads "April 9, 1700 Came Stephen Gill Administrator of Daniel Maccomus deceased, his estate and prayed the Administration which was ordered to be granted warrants to appraisors and to swear thereunto". Then he appears some 10 years later to help John, Daniel's son, to exchange the land on the Severn for 200 acres on Bynan's Run in what was then Baltimore County. Possibly he aided the family after Daniel's death until John could earn a living.

This 98 acres was near the present city of Annapolis (then Providence) and was a part of that level stretch of sandy soil which still characterizes that section of the State. It was being settled rather quickly when Daniel died for the population had been moving Northward from St. Mary's and had reached a sufficient number to justify moving the seat of government there in 1708. Annapolis in 1699 was certainly a small gathering of houses but it was growing rapidly. Standing beside the river it made an excellent port. Small boats that plied up and down the Chesapeake Bay, contacting the plantations along the shores, would make Annapolis their headquarters. To this little port came the tobacco from the

countryside to be exported. Here the bulk of the imports from abroad would be received.

Though Daniel may have been somewhat isolated on his little plantation he did have access to the most important settlement in the Colony.

One does not think of those sandy fields along the Severn in terms of tobacco today. To the Colonists it must have seemed otherwise for they certainly made a determined effort to grow tobacco there. When Daniel died he left a third of a hogshead of tobacco which was valued at 1 pound, 19 shillings and 2 pence. One reason everyone grew tobacco was that when you actually had it in your hand it was just as good as money. Of course, these early settlers over-produced and ruined their market as early as 1666. Such vicissitudes in the tobacco market were not the only things to discourage the early planter. In the years 1694-5 there was an unusual scarcity in the Colony. Some sort of a destructive disease appeared in the live stock. In these years, 25,429 cattle died and some 62,000 hogs. Two years later a violent epidemic broke out and killed many of the people.

Under such conditions Daniell and Elizabeth Maccomus undertook to clear their land, build their house and raise their family.

We have only two dates for this period. One son William was born October 16th, 1689 and Daniel (from whom we are descended) was born January 12th, 1697. Since John inherited the property we may assume he was the eldest. Probably Alexander came between William and Daniel.

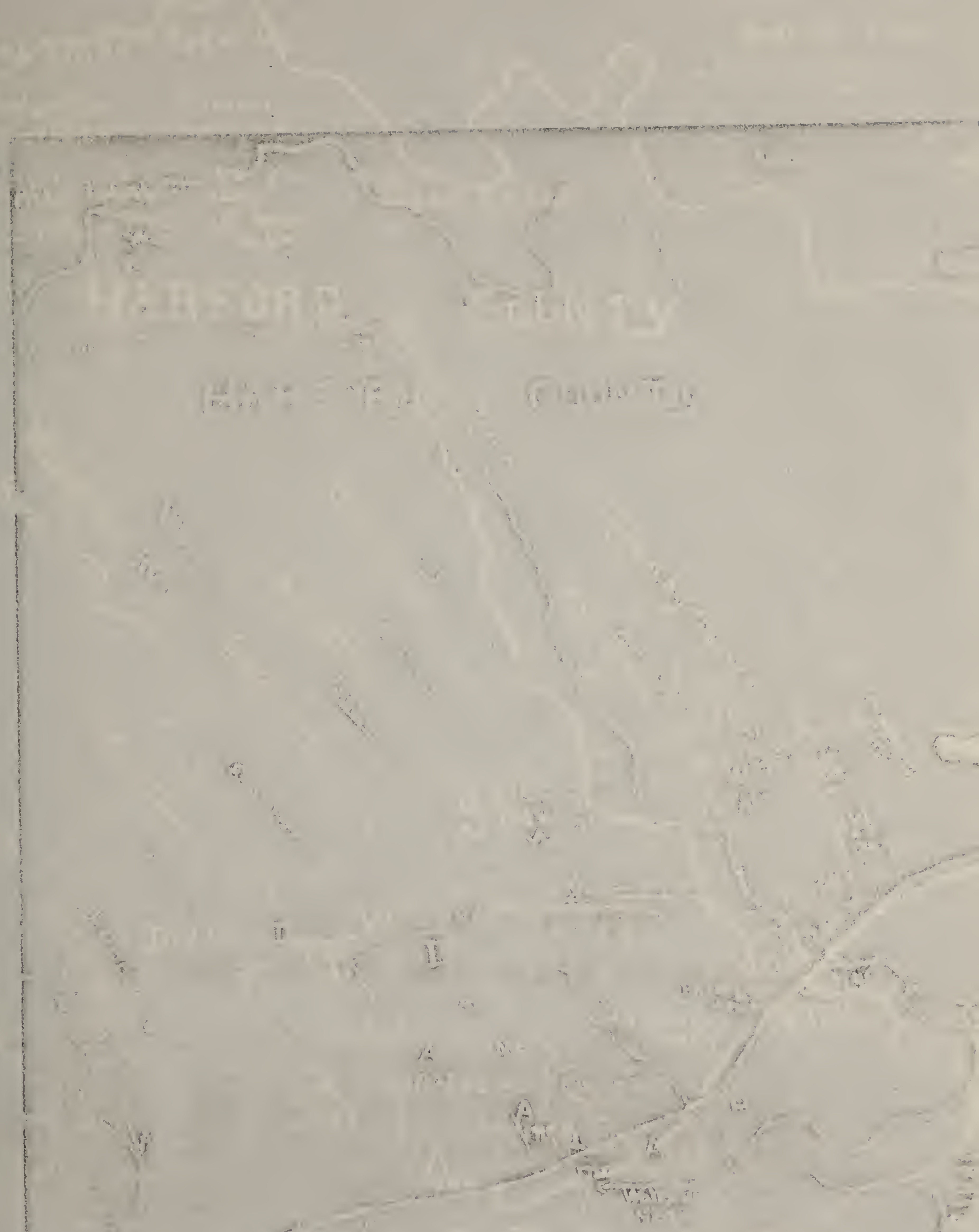
things. We note that he had six "alkamy spoons" but no forks,- they were not being used then. Fingers served instead. So Daniell had four napkins, table cloths and towels. When you got your fingers too greasy you would dip them into a little bowl of water on the table and wipe them on a convenient towel. Of course at this time the Colonists, who were in the planter grade, did not have silver. They used earthen ware and trenchers on their tables. One looks in vain for anything like luxuries in Daniell's assets,- unless you wish to list one old looking glass and three old books. Here we meet for the first time a number of items that we shall encounter frequently in the inventories of a later period. Thus, "a box Iron and heaters", iron candle sticks, iron pots and hooks, the taylor's goose, morters and pestles and various odds and ends of glass bottles and bits of lumber.

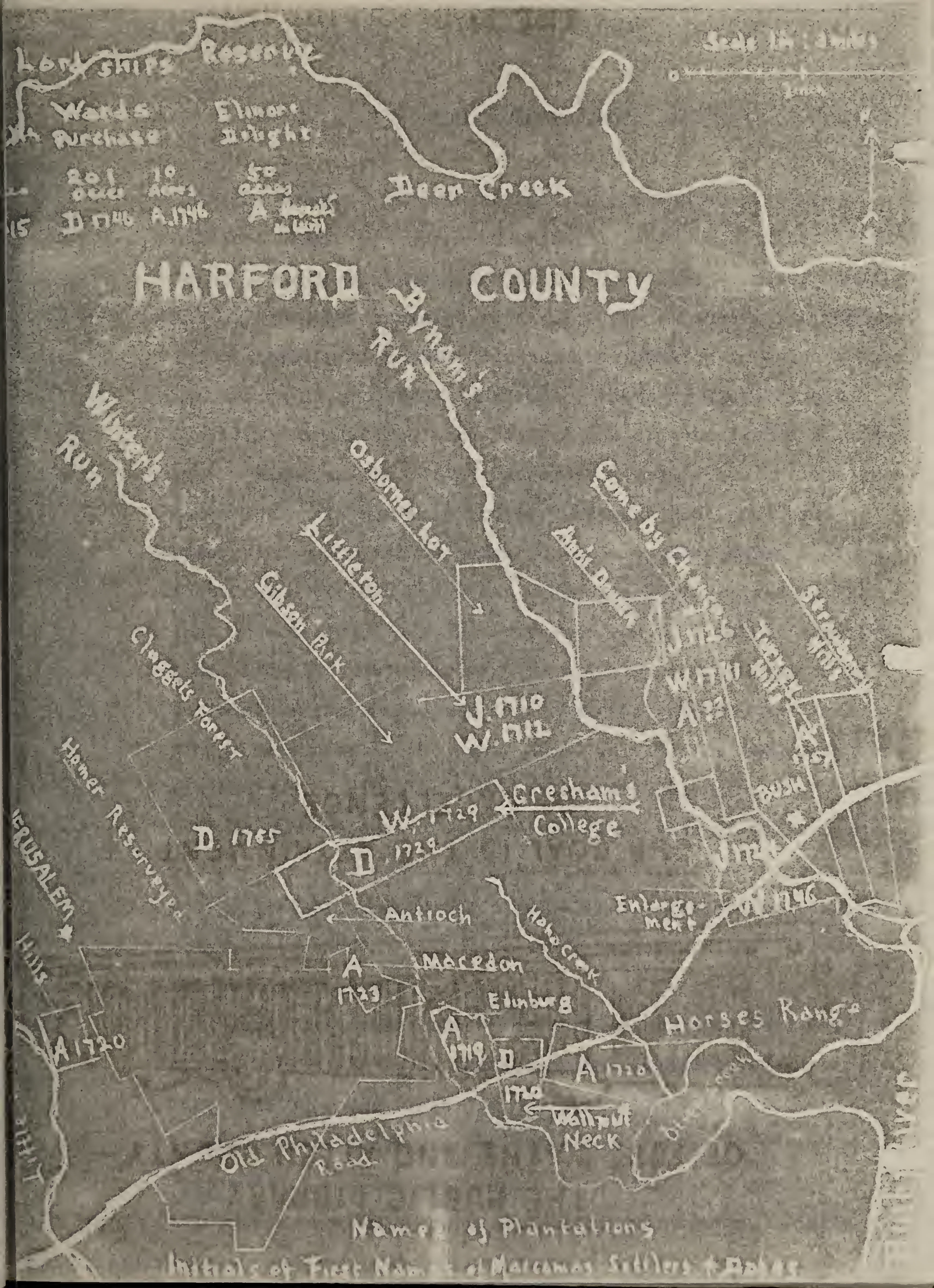
Those old appraisers certainly did not miss much. They even listed an old hammer worth 4 pence. That old paile and piggin might have been skipped. By the way a piggin was a dipper with a long handle. Some idea of values on certain articles can be had when you note that two old bags were worth three shillings. We can understand that, when we think of the scarcity of cloth in those times. Daniell had not yet gotten Elizabeth a spinning wheel and loom.

When I first read this inventory over, some two years ago I felt shocked. It seemed so pitifully meager. It seemed to me that Daniell and his family were living in poverty. After reading a large number of inventories of Daniell's times and his sons I do not feel that Daniell was

anything like as badly off as a great many other planters of his day. He was a going concern. He had his land, his live stock, furnished home, and his yearly crop of tobacco. Thousands of planters with no more assets than his became well-to-do and some became wealthy.

The mere recital of a few dates, when a farm was bought, when children were born and when a man died, do not give any description of the tragedy that occurred in the last year of the 17th Century. A young planter gave up all hope of a splendid life in the New World, all hope of seeing his boys grow to manhood in the thriving young Colony, all realization of those dreams that he and Elizabeth had conceived in the Old Country. More pathetic than that was the life of the young woman who had to rear her children in a strange land entirely removed from the comfort and aid of old friends and relatives. Nothing is known of this stalwart soul. By inference we may picture her as a woman of character and devotion, for she not only gave birth to four sturdy sons but she also must have formed their characters in those years when she had them in the cabin by the Severn.


HARFORD COUNTY


Lordships Reserve
Wards Purchase
Elmore Delight
201 acres
10 Acres
50 acres
15
D 1746
A 1746
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Deer Creek
Scale
HARFORD COUNTY
Bynam's Run
Wynton's Run
Osbornes Lot
Littleton
Gibson Park
Cloggets Forest
Homer Resurveyed
Come by Chance
J 1726
W 1711
A 22
J 1710
W 1712
Greshams College
W 1729
D 1729
D 1765
Antioch
Bush
Enlargement
W 1746
Hoho Creek
Macedon
A 1723
Elinburg
A 1719
D
A 1720
1710
Wallput Neck
Horses Range
A 1720
Jerusalem Hills
Old Philadelphia Road
Names of Plantations
Initials of First Names of Marcomas Settlers + Dates

THE FOUR BROTHERS

The scene of our wanderings, in the footsteps of the earliest American - born McComases, lies in what is now Harford County, Maryland. However, until 1773 it was Baltimore County and all the old documents speak of it as an indefinite region lying above Anne Arundel County. That portion in which we are interested lies between two "runs", known as Winter's and Bynam's. Parallel to these and to the southwest lies a larger stream known as the Little Gunpowder River. Such curious names evidently run back to the Gunpowder Plot when some enterprising Englishman sought to blow up King James I, for there was a Captain Bynam and a Captain Winter mixed up in that undertaking. All three streams run in a fairly straight line from the northwest down into the Bush River, which is an inlet of the Chesapeake Bay. Between the two runs and along their borders the early Maccomas families took up their plantations between the years 1710 and 1720.

To get any sort of an individual picture of these four pioneer planters and their plantations we must acquire a fairly good picture of their home-lands, occupations, customs, neighbors, schools, churches, their houses and the curious things contained within them.

Some fifty years after the settlement under Lord Calvert at St. Mary's, in 1634, the Colony had expanded and surveyors were running their lines for new plantations in Baltimore County. These surveyors must have been rather hardy young Englishmen. The land into which they went was a great wilderness of roaming hills and turbulent streams. Today,

with our accurate transits, theodolite and compasses it is possible for the trained young scientist to make accurate and permanent surveys. Not so in 1684. All that those young men had was a crude compass and a chain 66 feet long. With the compass they got their directions with little nicety and with their chains they got their distances. Of course, when a chain goes over a hill the straight away line is shortened and that throws the actual lines of the survey out of keeping with the measured lines of a map. No wonder these old properties had to be re-surveyed. That is not the worst of it. Those pioneer surveyors had no markers to set in the ground. Instead, they hacked the bark off sturdy trees. Red and white oaks were their favorites. If an oak stood 20 or 30 feet from a corner that their survey indicated, they hacked the tree and forgot the survey. As a consequence we find one of our ancestors, Daniel McComas, insisting that a County Commission determine the lines of his property in 1777. At the meeting, John Paca, one of the wealthiest men in the County and the father of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, presided. Witnesses testified that it had been their understanding that a certain oak marked the corner of the property; however, another oak had been in that locality some forty years before and that threw a little uncertainty on the whole investigation. Two of the largest plantations in that section had to be re-surveyed about 40 years after the first survey.

However, one of these old plantations known as "Gresham's Colledge" which was surveyed in 1684, October 27, was taken

up by our ancestors in 1729 and on it they lived for 200 years, with no serious debates about the old surveyors' lines. In the records of patents for lands in the province of Maryland under the Dominion of the Right Honorable Charles Lord Baron of Baltimore is entered the boundary lines of this old plantation and as usual it starts with a "bounded oak" and then runs in rather straight lines until it encloses five hundred acres, "more or less". To which is added this sentence: "together with all rights, profits, benefits and privileges thereunto belonging (Royal Mines Excepted) to have and to hold, pay rent in one pound sterling in silver or gold, to be paid at our Citty of St. Marias at the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Michael the Archangell".

To go back to the early surveyors, no description of them has come down to us; but, however, we have one little snapshot which occurs in an old land record. Three of them were laying a line near a stream, one of them crossed the water, climbed a bluff, bounded a tree, slid down the bluff, killed a rattlesnake and ate his heart. Undoubtedly, their surroundings delighted them. There were great flocks of wild turkeys that would rise from a field with a tremendous noise of beating wings. Some of them weighed as much as 30 pounds. Then there were great numbers of quail, pheasants and woodcock. Some of the birds were unknown to these young Englishmen. For example there was a brilliant red bird that even Governor Leonard tried to capture to send over to his brother Lord Cecil Calvert. In addition to birds there were bobcats, minks, otters and of course the skunk. Then, too, there were animals which have

long since deserted Maryland, wolves, bear, elk and buffalo. Along the shores of the Bay oysters, crab and fish were most plentiful. In short here was a place that offered easy hunting and fishing and an over-abundance of food.

Following the surveyors came the earliest pioneers. They made their clearings with a view to growing tobacco. An ideal location would be on the side of a hill sloping to the south and protected from chilling winds by surrounding forests. Beside the tobacco crop they had to make a clearing to grow their own provisions and the Lord Proprietor insisted that they should have two acres for food to every one acre of tobacco. Consequently our ancestors did not follow the example of the Massachusetts Colony and starve to death with every hard winter.

What sort of houses these earliest settlers put up, we know only by a few descriptions. Probably, the very first had only three walls of logs, the front being covered with skins. Straw and pine branches served as beds. Tables and chairs were missing but skins of wild animals were plentiful. Such rude shelter soon gave way to the familiar log cabin. As the country gradually settled and neighbors lived nearer each other there was more cooperation and better buildings were possible. I have not been able to find any old wooden building in Harford County that dates back into the early 18th century. Fires destroy these old houses constantly. Few survive a century. Curiously enough, the only one I have been able to find is the one which was built on Gresham's Colledge by one of the McComas family, certainly before 1750

and which has come down the generations usually occupied by a McComas until recent years. This old house was originally built of logs with an enormous stone chimney at each end. The floors had been made of hard wood from trees that had been split with heavy iron wedges and then dressed with an adze, and laid in such a way that the narrow part of one timber matched the wide part of another. Heavy timbers in the cellar were fastened with stout wooden pegs. Here and there were a few hammered iron nails. In pioneer days they were rare, one paid 10 penny for a dozen of a given size and 20 penny for a dozen for a larger size. Whence comes today our so-called "10 penny" and "20 penny nails". In fact they were so precious that some planters, when they were forced to move, burned down their houses and salvaged the nails. This old house had a second story which was reached by two narrow, twisting stairways. In the days when my father spent his boyhood there, there was a well a few feet from the house. It was not there in colonial times, then they had to walk quite a distance to get their water from a stream. My uncle detected the presence of water by having a peach tree twig bend in his hand as he walked over the land beside the house, that was in 1850. Near the pump the pioneers had an ice house to carry them through the hot summer with ice cut from Winter's Run at the foot of the hill on which the old house stood.

No one can say just what the interior looked like when Daniel McComas moved in, sometime in the 1740's. We do know, however, that the big room with the large fireplace was the

most important room in the house. Here we know the family met to eat their meals.

In the earlier times the planters had no dining tables or chairs. They used a plank about three feet wide and as long as the size of the family demanded and rested the plank upon two trestles. On either side of this table were benches which they called "forms". In those times there was no china or silverware. Toward the middle of the century pewter and some silver appeared. Trenchers were constantly used for large platters and for small plates. Each person would be supplied with a trencher about 12 inches by 12 of hard wood some 2 inches thick. This was hollowed out in the center and liquid and solid food could be eaten from it with knives and spoons, no forks in the early days. There is an old rhyme which runs:

"I eat my peas with honey
I've done it all my life,
It makes the peas taste funny
But they will stick on my knife."

Occasionally, two people would eat from the same trencher, each with his own spoon. Occasionally, every one would eat from a large iron pot in the middle of the table, each armed with a long wooden spoon. Children, who were not large enough to sit on the forms, stood up; and one authority says they kept quiet. That I do not believe.

We must think of this Colonial period in Harford County as a time in which things were quickly changing. The period in which we are now interested runs from the time the first brother (John) went into the County in 1710 to the time when the last brother (Daniel) died in 1765. During this time the Colonists greatly enlarged their plantations, made a great

deal of money and improved their homes and living conditions. At the beginning of this period we find that corn was the most dependable vegetable. It appeared in corn-pone, batter-bread, pudding and what they called johnnie-cakes, which is a play on the word journey-cakes,- tough little cakes that could endure long trips. One account comes down to us concerning a Mr. Stockett, in Baltimore County, who had venison for every meal until the meat made his servant sick. Later on the planters had all sorts of vegetables and by 1765 they were importing many delicacies from Europe. Then they had permanent dining tables that need not be folded up and taken out of the room like the old trestle table. Moreover, they sat around on chairs and not on forms, that had to be slid against the wall to make room in the living room; and, also, to serve for seats. The pile of wooden trenchers gradually gave way to earthen ware, china, pewter and some silver.

A rather amusing feature of this period is the curious correspondence between the wealth of the planter and the expense of his beds and bedding. In the earliest records where a planter left only 10 or 15 pounds of worldly goods there was no mention of beds or bedding. A little later when the average value of their household goods was around 200 pounds sterling then beds would be valued at some 8 or 10 pounds and the rich planter who left some 600 pounds would have bedding worth 30 to 40 pounds. This seemed to be his one important luxury. The bed of course had no springs but obtained some resiliency from cords stretched across the frame. Mattresses were stuffed in the early days with the fluff of cat-tails and in the later

days with soft down. All sorts of money could be spent on the curtains suspended from the four posts to keep out drafts. Quilts came with all sorts of designs woven into them, some very intricate and ingenuous. One would imagine that the cost of a man's wearing apparel would be a better index of his wealth than the cost of his bed. That was not so among these old planters.

Clothing presented a great problem in the early days. Then the Colonist did not have money enough to buy clothes from England. It was necessary for him to make them for himself, consequently, we find in the inventories of the property owned by the Colonists in this period the listing of spinning wheels and of woolen wheels. Some insight into the life of these pioneer mothers can be had from the study of these old wheels. First of all it was necessary for the men to grow some good flax, to cut it, strip off the leaves and bring the plants to the shed where they kept the brakers, sometimes called "breekers". The braker was a grooved plank with another plank hinged to its end, and also grooved. This upper plank was slammed down on the lower one after the flax twigs had been laid in the grooves. By this process the bark was beaten off and the long thin fibers could be pulled out. Then these were taken to a "hecklet", which was a plank with rows of thin iron spikes sticking up. Through these spikes the flax fibers were combed and combed until they reached just the fineness that the lady of the house wished. This bunch of fibers constituted the "tow" and it was taken to the spinning wheel and hung upon a staff. From the tow the skillful fingers of the

spinster teased out a thread which ran down to a spindle that whirled around, as she worked the treadle of the wheel; now fast and now slow, as she determined the character of the thread she was making. Some unmarried women went to the different plantations and did their spinning. They were known as "spinsters". One of our ancestors married one. One seldom thinks, when looking at old pieces of home-spun cloth, what skill, patience and hard work went into making those uniform threads and close weaves. Only part of the work was accomplished when the threads were ready. Rather large and cumbersome looms were placed in their store-room or in a shed outside of the house. Apparently the hardest part of the work with the loom was in getting it well threaded and making the threads feed freely.

In each step in producing a yard of linen there were tricks to be learned. It was the clever and skillful woman who managed to spin and weave nice material while bringing up eight to twelve children, cooking for the family, keeping the house in condition and occasionally lending a hand when the work outside demanded it.

In addition to linen, woolen goods had to be made. After the sheep were shorn and the wool was cleaned it was also combed over the heckler and worked down to the desired fineness. Then it went to the woolen wheel where the fibers were twisted into the desired strength and fastened together. Sometimes the loom was set up carrying threads of both wool and flax and this they called "lindsey-woolsey".

As money began to come in, the planter relieved his poor wife to some extent by buying a cheap linen from abroad called

Osnaburg (from a little town in Germany by that name). The Colonists called it by all sorts of names such as Ossenberg, Osnabrig and anything that remotely sounded like it.

A few descriptions of the way the early planters looked; when they went down to a ship, which had just come from England; to buy some goods, gives us a notion of their appearance. Some wore nothing more than shirts and pants made of blue Osnaburg, with no hats or shoes. Some wore a linen coat and shirt with a broad white collar to the shirt, trousers which they called "shorts" reached down to their knees and were made of soft doeskin. Then came a pair of woolen stockings and then a pair of low shoes with some sort of metal buckle. Perched on top of this planter could be a nice round hat imported from London or a rabbit skin taken on his own farm. Around Annapolis in the middle 18th century the well-to-do Colonist was as lavishly and stylishly dressed as men in London. There were only a few of that type in Harford County.

Speaking of the heavy load of work that the planter's wife had to carry, leads us to the question of what help could be obtained in those days. First of all, were the "the indentured servants" who began coming over shortly after the first settlers. These were evidently a very good class of people who wanted to improve themselves but who had not enough money to purchase their passage, which in 1666 was about 6 pounds. This amount was pledged to the captain of the ship who brought them over. When they arrived the captain turned them over to some planter for the price of the passage and the indentured servant had to

pay his master back by working for 7 years, if he were 16 years of age; but only for 5 years, if he were over 21. We have quite an account of the "Province of Maryland" written by a young man named George Alsop who came over to Maryland in 1666 and was employed by Mr. Thomas Stockett in Baltimore County. Later he went back to England and wrote an account of his experience. He tells us that the servants were very well treated, that they worked only five and a half days in summer and in the middle of the day could go into the house out of the heat for three hours. In winter there was little to do but to cut wood for the fire or to go hunting. Servants who were skilled in any trade were very much sought and never worked in the fields. When they had worked out their time they were given fifty acres of land, corn enough for a year, three suits of clothes and tools,- and a gun which they were not allowed to sell for a year. Alsop declared that life was much easier and pleasanter in Maryland than in England. Unhappily, this condition of affairs did not last. Just before the American Revolution broke out the indentured servant was having a very hard time. Another visitor came to Maryland, William Eddis. "His Letters To America" from 1769 to 1777, describes the condition of the indentured servant. He tells how the planters became more interested in their slaves than in their servants. They could buy a good man slave for 40 pounds and work him all his life. So it was necessary to keep him healthy and strong and in good condition. The servants they would loose after a few years and consequently they were worked very hard during their term of service. Their

unfortunate condition was made worse by England's sending a large number of convicts into the Colony. Gradually the planters came to think of the servant in the same terms that they thought of the convicts. We have here a rather pitiful picture. Advertisements were shown in London and other cities telling of the wonderful advantages and great opportunities in Lord Baltimore's Colony. They were told that if they had any skill at all they could choose their own employer and in a short time could pay back the expense of their passage which was then 9 pounds. Most of this was completely false. Eddis tells us that when a ship came into Annapolis planters and mechanics and others would repair on board to obtain servants. Then he adds "The adventurers of both sexes are exposed to view and very few are happy enough to make their own stipulation". It would seem that most of them were bitterly disappointed to find they had to work out their term of service and to receive only food and clothing during the period. That was not the worst of it. There was money in getting these young people to take passage for the Province. That resulted in building up a system "crimping". A young man might get drunk or receive a blow on the head and when he regained consciousness he would be aboard ship on his way to Lord Baltimore's colony. When we recall that four or five hundred so-called criminals were dumped into Maryland each year for a number of years we cannot help wondering why there was so little crime. Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that a great number of these "crimnals" were political prisoners. Possibly their hatred of the King was one of the reasons why Maryland was a leader in the War against England.

With the coming of the slaves conditions changed conspicuously. It would seem that the first settlers were interested to import negro slaves, but we find very few of them mentioned in the early inventories. In our own family the eldest brother, John, who died in 1739, had a woman indentured servant but no slaves. The youngest brother, Daniel, who died in 1765, had over half of his personal estate in slaves. That would seem to represent the general trend in this period. As one pages through a number of inventories for the estates in those times there is no one principle which runs through them all, so far as slaves are concerned. For example Aquila Hall, one of the wealthiest men in the County, whose bedding by the way was worth 72 pounds, had 41 negroes who were valued at 912 pounds and he had only two white servants valued at 2 pounds. And again Miles Gibson, who died in 1692, had the following slaves with their estimated values: a man of 30 years worth 46 pounds, another of 30 years worth 20 pounds, a woman of 20 worth 40 pounds, another woman of 20 worth 20 pounds,- probably the difference in worth was due to difference in strength. Then he owned a negro girl of 16 worth 20 pounds, a boy of eleven worth 15 and a small child worth 5. The mention of these two instances might lead one to think that slavery was prevalent at the beginning of the 18th century. That is not so. In a list of 19 names running from 1695 to 1709 only four have slaves entered in the inventories.

The puzzle that Mr. Gibson's slaves present in their different values appears frequently. Often we find a negro man and woman of the same age given the same value. Why? Was not

the man's labor in the field worth more than the woman's work in the house? Perhaps the woman rated her value because she was a prospective mother and would bring her owner wealth from her off-spring. Note that even a small child was worth 5 pounds. By the way, the price of slaves up to 1765 rose rather slowly. Thus we find in the '40s men selling around 45 pounds and in the '70s selling around 48 pounds.

How well these slaves were cared for we cannot know by any first-hand information. Some historians lead us to believe that they were well treated. Of course, that must have been so in many cases for we have a number of records of owners that set their slaves free. On the other hand I note, in reading these old inventories, that some of the slave owners are credited with a pound or two for the bedding of their slaves and with others there is no mention of any such items. Undoubtedly, there were many cases where an affection sprang up between slave and master. When Daniel McComas was about to die in 1765 he wanted to do something for a younger son so he bequeathed him a young slave named "Cesar" aged 5. Aquilla lived only a few years and before he died he willed Cesar to his mother, Martha. Cesar was then only 13 years of age. When a census of Harford County was made in August 15th, 1776, to determine the number of whites and blacks in the County; and, also, the number of men of military age, we get our last glimpse of Cesar. He was then 16 and Martha McComas needed him badly for her sons were off in the Army and the problem of food was a pressing one.

Slaves as a means of making money and making it quickly was not to be compared with raising tobacco. Tobacco offered a

means for making a great deal of money in a comparatively short time. That was so from the settlement of the Colony down to the Revolution. Here is a statement from Lord Baltimore written in 1688: "If there be any that live in a poor manner, it is not from the low cost of tobacco, but from their own sloth, ill husbandry, and profusely spending their crop in Brandewine, and other liquors, it being evident and known to all that know these parts that such as are industrious and frugal, live in great plenty in comparison with husbandmen in England, of the same rank; divers of them grow from nothing to great estates, and the reason is clear, for a painful (painstaking) and able man will in summer make his four hogsheads of tobacco which, at the rate that it now is, will produce in England 14 or 15 pounds, which will buy him clothes and another servant clear, besides which he will plant corn enough to find himself, and to sell four or five pound more, and rear a stock of cattle."

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No one could know conditions in the Colony as well as Lord Baltimore. He was a shrewd and capable man. His statement explains how a number of men started with very little and left a considerable estate when they died. That is certainly true of two of the four brothers who tried their fortunes in Harford County.

Referring back to Alsop, he tells us something about growing tobacco when he was an indentured servant: "They sow the seed (which is much smaller than mustard seed) in some small beds and patches digged up and made so by Art, and about May, the Plants commonly appear green in those beds. In June they are transplanted from their beds and set in little

hillocks in distant rowes, dug up for the same purpose. Some twice or thrice they are weeded, and succoured from their illegitimate leaves that would be peeping out from the body of the stalk. They top the several plants as they find occasion in their predominating rankness. About the middle of September they cut the tobacco down and carry it into the houses (made for that purpose) to bring it to its purity. And after it has attained by a convenient attendance upon time, to its own perfection, it is then tyed up in bundles and packed in Hog's -heads, and then laid by for the trade."

In addition to trimming the plants, that Alsop mentioned, the planter was required to sort out the leaves of each plant into two classes, "ground leaves and also good tobacco". When Mr. Whiteacre died in 1740 his good tobacco was appraised at 2 pence a pound but his ground leaves only brought 1 penny per pound. However, in that same year another estate shows good tobacco valued only at 1.2 pence. As a matter of fact the prices for tobacco during this period ranged between the two figures just quoted. In one case, in this same year 1740, a Mr. Stokes' tobacco was valued at 5 pence a pound. It must have been of exceptional quality and preparation. Often it was sold by the hundred weight and brought frequently 16 shillings and 8 pence per hundred weight and that is the price which brother John's estate got for his tobacco in 1739. That is about 2 pence a pound.

Tobacco was so valuable that it was used in the place of money. One could pay his debts to the State with tobacco. As early as 1640 there was a fine of one shilling for being drunk,

or six pounds of tobacco. Their test for drunkedness was good. It occurred when there was a "perturbation in the organs of sense or motion."

Ships coming into harbors all up and down the Chesapeake Bay would take tobacco in payment for the goods which were received by the planters.

How many pounds of tobacco the Colonists could get from an acre of land is a guess. In 1929 a survey of 5,356 Maryland farms reported an average of 654 pounds per acre. The lowest figure was 435 per acre cultivated by colored people in Anne Arundel County; and the highest, 808, by white owners in St. Mary's County. Maybe we would not be far wrong if we figured the Colonist with his lack of modern knowledge and appliances obtained somewhere around 500 pounds per acre. That is about one hog's head per acre. So, according to Lord Baltimore "a painful man" ought to cultivate about four acres in order to make a good profit.

This prosperity that came from tobacco was due to the enormous demand for tobacco in Europe. Apparently it was exceedingly popular. However, there were a number of people who were not at all well disposed to the new custom of smoking. King James the First denounced it in no feeble terms. He claimed that it was an invention of the Devil and smelt like the fumes of Hell. It resulted in a degeneration of health and character which was disastrous as any drunkedness. There were a number of others beside the King that were critical of tobacco. Many didn't like the odor and called it the "stink weed". A term often used was "sot weed".

Like all good things the growing of tobacco was overdone. Gradually the supply passed the demand. Toward the latter part of this 17-10-1765 period the planters in Harford County began to turn their attention to other crops. However, by that time tobacco had brought a lot of wealth into the County. Again turning to the old inventories we can get a very good picture of the way our forefathers prospered. From the time that the surveyors left the County until the time that the County declared itself free from England those Colonists made a progress in their prosperity which is really very surprising. Before me lies a copy of an inventory of the estate of Adam Burchall, March 16, 1694: 2 cows at 4 pounds, 2 small yearlings 16 shillings, a 12 year old steer 15s, a smoothing iron 2s, 2 old pails and a churn 1s, an old chest 5s, an iron pot and 2 pot hooks 6s, a frying pan, 3 iron wedges and 1 old gun 7s, 2 young sows 7s, a parcel of corn 7s, and a parcel of lumber 6 pence. That would be real poverty any place except in Maryland at the end of the 17th Century. Mr. Burchall was a going concern with these few articles in his possession. If he had good land and was a "painful man" he would in a few years enjoy some prosperity. Running over a long list of inventories, for about 50 years after Mr. Burchall's time, I find that the amount that the average planter "could not take with him" amounted to about 220 pounds. That would seem to mean that when tobacco was "king" the average planter was able to live a comfortable life and set aside a considerable sum for his family.

In quoting these various sums in pounds, shillings and pence it is very easy to get a wrong idea about the cost of things two centuries ago. Most of us think of an English

pound as worth about $4.80, and so it was for a number of years. Within this last year, 1949, the exchange has dropped to $2.80. Of course, we can form an idea of what a pound would buy for us today by simply consulting the rate of exchange between the countries, but there never has been a rate of exchange between the centuries. Indeed, the only way to get any idea at all of what the pound 200 years ago might buy for us today is to select something which everyone has needed all through the years and which is in constant demand and supply. Some economists have thought that wheat would make a good standard since it is in constant demand for food, but when I compare the price of wheat in a New York newspaper for January 1720 at 10 shillings per hundred weight with that for December 1749 at 15 shillings per hundred weight I am at a loss to see how to use it as a standard. And it doesn't help the problem a bit when we find wheat at a $1.62 a bushel in 1925 and $1.07 in 1930. However, there is one thing I notice in going over the old inventories and that is that cows sold for around 3 pounds per cow and horses for around 5 pounds. Evidently the old planters would breed these animals so that their price would pretty well represent a balance between demand and supply through the years. There is, also, a fair constancy in prices for cows and horses in modern times, before the introduction of machinery on the farms. In 1925 a good cow was worth about $55; and a good horse, for farm work around $80. That would seem to indicate that with these rather poor standards a pound in Colonial times would buy from 25 to 30 dollars worth of goods today. Perhaps, this idea is entirely misleading

and we should abandon it; but, at least, we must concede that that old English pound sterling had a very much higher value than the English pound of the last 50 years.

So far we have been dealing with the material things that surrounded our ancestors and imposed upon them their ways of living. Now let us make an effort to learn something about the inner life of the old Colonist. Certainly the things he carried in his mind were as different from the ideas we entertain as the contents of his log houses are from the things with which we furnish our homes. Only a few of the old inventories mention any books. Of course, a man like Dr. Holliday had a splendid library, but the average planter had a house Bible, a Psalter and perhaps a book called "The Whole Duty of Man". Probably, many of them could not read the books they had. Our "brother John" had a Bible but he couldn't write his name. Their minds were not subjected to that unending flow of ideas that we constantly receive from newspapers and magazines. In 1775 Maryland had only two newspapers and no Rural Free Delivery. Some of the gentlemen in Annapolis read the "Maryland Gazette", but probably few copies reached into the houses in Harford County. Perhaps there is no greater contrast, between then and now, than in the way they spent their evenings as compared with our customs. First of all, they did not begin to make candles until they had commenced to raise cattle and to get tallow. They did take a pine stick and feather the end to give a good light and placed it in the fire-place. Long winter evenings, when the families of today are reading all sorts of literature, were entirely too dark for the family to enjoy any reading.

The earliest Colonists were interested in educating their children and undoubtedly those who had any education instructed their children. Often the clergymen would hold school for the people in their parish. Occasionally, a planter would have an indentured servant who was well educated and he would hold school for the neighborhood. There was no public school in Harford until around 1770. About that time the little red brick school house appeared, that some of us can still remember. Curiously enough my grandmother taught school there, in Franklinville, and also the Henry McComas, who shot the British General at North Point, went to school there. The subjects taught in those times were; reading and writing, elementary mathematics and often surveying and navigation along with some history and the Bible. I have a letter written by Aaron McComas in 1778 which shows that he had been well trained in writing English. I suppose his father, Soloman, could read for the letter is addressed to him, but I do not believe that Solomon's father, William, who settled in Harford County in 1712 could read; for he never signed his name, but used a stencil. Apparently these old planters respected education and tried to obtain it for their children.

Of course, the Church was the center of culture for the community. The clergyman as a gentleman with high principals and splendid education should have been a man wielding an enormous influence. Unfortunately, in both Maryland and Virginia many of the clergymen left much to be desired. Some of them were very badly educated and had very low standards of living. Maryland was worse than Virginia because the Lord Proprietor

appointed the rector for life with a salary of 200 pounds. They used to race horses, drink and gamble. Some of them would start the marriage ceremony for a poor couple and then stop and wait until they were paid before they pronounced the couple man and wife. One of them selected a curate, who had been a convict, to read the church services; which he did badly, when he had been drinking. When a commissioner protested, the rector sued him and had him dismissed from his position. This degeneracy among the rectors of the established church of England had an interesting effect. It drove decent and serious people into other denominations. Among these were the Quakers, that the Colonists did not quite understand. In the land records one runs across such curious insertions as this: "Present also, John Norris of the Society of Friends". No other member of the group has his religious denomination mentioned. Towards the last of the period that we are discussing, the Methodists won a great many converts and built the first Methodist college in America at Abingdon. The Roman Catholics were badly treated. They were not allowed to build their own churches and had to use some large room in a farm-house for a chapel.

Naturally these people retained the superstitions that came over with them from England and it seemed entirely reasonable to them that there should be witches and witchcraft and that ghosts should return to haunt certain places. When doubt was cast upon these beliefs they referred to the "Word Of God" that recognized both witches and ghosts. With little education and absolutely no training "in scientific method" it was impossible for them to see the world around them as intelligently

as a high school graduate of today. Consequently, they were confused and apprehensive about a lot of things that give us no concern today.

In the ideas that they entertained concerning medicine we can see a curious blending of superstition and experience. Some of the herbs they collected were really beneficial for certain ailments, but what can you make of this idea? If you were indisposed and wished to take either an emetic or a purgative you would make a tea out of walnut bark. If you wished it to act as an emetic the bark would have to be scraped upward but if you wished a purgative the bark must be scraped downward, before putting it in the boiling water. Naturally, some of their remedies were useless and some injurious but the whole matter was a great mystery to them. Nor were their physicians in a position to give them much information or assistance; hampered as they were with the besetting notion that all sorts of maladies were due to the presence of bad blood, which had to be removed by bleeding, or by leeches. Of course, we should not be too critical when we recall the weird things we do when we have some trouble that lies beyond the knowledge of present-day medicine. At this time the use of vaccines for smallpox had not reached the Colony and at least three people out of five showed the pit-marks of that disease on their faces.

Possibly, our picture of the conditions in this early period is becoming a little drab. One way to liven it up is to quote from a book written by Eben Cook, Gentleman, which was titled "The Sot-Weed Factor, Or A Voyage To Maryland, A

Satyr In Which Is Described The Laws, Government Etc. In Burlesque Verse", London 1708. Mr. Cook brought with him an order to buy several thousand pounds of tobacco, a sense of humor and a knack for writing bad poetry. He describes in what he calls verse some of his experiences. He didn't have much luck in buying his tobacco for an innocent looking Colonist who posed as a Quaker sold him a number of hogsheads to be delivered on the ship. They weren't delivered. Cook sued to regain his money. The Court decided that he should be repaid and he would be obliged to accept what passed for money in the Colony; namely tobacco, or the produce from the farm. In disgust he took ship back to England. After this rough treatment and his rough experiences in a pioneer land plus his sense of humor we may not expect a very accurate picture of old Maryland, but since it is one of the very few accounts which have come down as a description of personal experiences we should give it some consideration.

Cook gives a remarkable picture of the old planters on "Court days". In a little settlement the planters used a large house for their court. People drifted in from miles around. They sat themselves on the ground, all talking with each other and all drinking each others liquor. Eventually, a cryer appeared among them and the court was called to session. Everyone who could get into the room did so for the judge was a highly esteemed man. He could read. As for the lawyers they put on a grand show that almost resulted in a fight. After the session was over Mr. Cook sought a room in the tavern, but he could not get accommodations as there were several

drunken men in each room. He went out, wandered around and climbed into a corn-loft half drunk himself and fell sound asleep. When he woke someone had stolen his hat, wig, shoes and stockings. In this forlorn condition he hunted for a friend who had come to court with him the day before and found him lying naked on a table. After some repairs they both went to look for their horse, a "rhoan", which had strayed. In that enterprise his friend disappeared and never returned. After that his luck changed. A prominent planter invited him to make a visit. Two things impressed him, one was the enormous meal set before him with wild fowl, fish, venison and turkey washed down with excellent Madera Wine; the other was two ladies. These he noticed after he had been dozing by the fire and discovered that they were playing cards. He remarked that they were in their "nightgounds" (probably dressing gowns). They invited him to take a hand and he did so and then they began quarrelling. One told the other that she should be out in the fields working with a hoe since she was nothing but an indentured servant, to which the other replied that she was very much superior since she at least wasn't a convict serving a term in the Colonies. This little episode led Mr. Cook to remark that he had run across several young women who were servants but claimed that they had come from very superior people and had escaped to Maryland to avoid a detested marriage. Throughout Cook's little book there runs a constant comment on the crudeness of the people. In that he did not agree with Eddis who found all sorts of people in the new world quite comparable to his compatriots in England. Upon one thing all seemed to be agreed. The Colonist in Maryland was very friendly

and most hospitable and, also, he was very tolerant of other peoples' customs and religions.

After this somewhat lengthy setting of the scene we must turn to the characters that played their roles in it, - the four sons of Daniell Macomus, who died on the banks of the Severn in 1699.

The eldest son, John, was probably born in 1687 for his next younger brother, William, we know was born in 1689. John probably grew up within easy reaching distance of Annapolis, which by his time had become quite an important town. Years before, in 1699, Eddis wrote that Annapolis "has the appearance of an agreeable village, and in a few years it will be the best built city in America as a spirit of improvement is predominent". He went on to describe how it was the seat of the government and that many public offices were established there, and, also, that a number of the principal families of the Colony had chosen that town for their residence. Then he added, "There are few towns, of the same size, in any part of the British Dominions that can boast a more polished society".

This was the problem that John Macomus had to work out. In 1710 he was a young man 23 years of age with three younger brothers living on plantation of 98 acres in the neighborhood of Annapolis. Undoubtedly, he realized the advantages in becoming a part of the most enterprising community in the Colony, but in the face of this he deliberately decided to exchange his 98 acres in Anne Arundel County for 200 acres in the heart of Baltimore County, - then almost a wilderness. It seems possible that he did this on the advice of Stephen Gill who

had selected the 98 acres for Daniell in 1687 and who assisted in the settlement of the estate in 1699, for Gill owned the property known as "Littleton" in Baltimore County. Before John exchanged his 98 acres on the Severn River for the 200 in Littleton, beside Bynam's Run, he must have made a trip out into that wilderness to get acquainted with the conditions. This did not necessitate a horse-back ride of 45 miles on uncertain roads and blazed trails. All he needed to do was to take a shallop from Annapolis, sail up the Chesapeake Bay, turn into the Bush River and pull up to a wharf at Otto Point. Then a five mile walk would take him to Littleton. How it appeared to his eyes we may not know, but it had been surveyed in 1683 and there must have been some clearings on it, which might give him ideas about the soil. Surely, it must have been good. A month ago I rode over it and can testify that after 230 years those great, broad, rolling hills are still yielding bountifully.

How his mind worked and why he made his decision he alone could tell, but it seems clear that had he cast in his lot with the growing town of Annapolis and had his brothers followed him there the history of the McComas line in Maryland might have been very different.

Whether he built his house near Bynam's Run to obtain his water easily, or whether he moved into some cabin already standing, there is no way of determining. We have a land record that he obtained the land in 1710 and a church record that his wife Anne presented him with a baby in 1713. This little citizen became the first "Mary McComas" in Maryland, thus heading the list of a great many descendents who bore the same name.

Two years after he had settled there his brother William bought a hundred acres from him for 23 pounds and as we have seen this was quite a little money for those days. John cultivated Littleton for about four years and then he sold it. Why? Surely it was good land and could have been developed into a paying plantation. William did just that with his hundred acres. Where John went after selling Littleton there is no record until 1724 when he bought 52 acres of a place called "Enlargement" which was on Bynam's Run a little south of Littleton. Then he bought some land in "Horses Range" not far from Enlargement. Then in 1726 he bought part of "Come by Chance" on the other side of Bynam's Run and there he may have lived until he died in 1739. Church records tell a little more about him. He had a son named John, born in 1715 and who died at 21 years of age. This birth and death are both entered in the records of the old Spesutia church, to which he went. Another church record tells of the birth of another daughter, also, named Mary in 1725. This simple item gives a glimpse at the old planters affection for his first daughter and the tender memory he had retained of her. After Mary came his son named Alexander, after John's brother who had moved up to Horses Range. We soon loose sight of Alexander, but we find his name among those of his cousins in Captain Bradford's Company at the time of The Revolution. The last child, Anne, did not marry until she was 30 years of age and was probably considered a hopeless old-maid. Then she married one John Poteet, who probably could not read for, when he witnessed her Uncle Alexander's will, he could only make his mark. We have two brief pictures of Anne; in one she

was called into court when it was trying to probate the will of a cousin, in the other she is taking title to a piece of property not far from Horses Range. This property my father bought in 1898 and I traced the deeds back to the one in which the Lord Proprietor assigned this land to Anne.

Unlike his brothers, John left no will; but after he died in 1739, an inventory was made of his estate. It shows that he had a proportionately large amount of his estate in live stock. However, he must have had a number of acres in tobacco for the inventory states 1211 pounds of good tobacco at 16 shillings 8 pence per hundred-weight, which totaled 10 pounds, 1 shilling and 10 pence. His 161 pounds of "ground leaf" at 8/4 brought only 13 shillings and 5 pence. His household equipment seems rather meager, only the barest necessities are there. Perhaps that white, indentured-servant, woman who had six months to serve and was valued at one pound might be considered the one item of luxury in the whole list. I cannot refrain from calling attention to the fact that his wearing "apparil" was valued at two pounds and his bedding at something over four pounds, and these items are in about the right ratio for an estate that totalled only 100 pounds and seven shillings, when the average planter in the County left something over twice that much.

John died when he was 52 years of age and left his daughter Anne 9 years old, Mary 15 and Alexander 18, and, also, his wife Anne who died 2 years later.

With these scanty materials no dependable picture can be drawn of this first McComas born on American soil. To me the role he played seems rather pathetic. He died younger than

any of his brothers, he had fewer children than they, and two of these died early. Despite his courage in starting life in the back-woods and taking up clearings in a number of different places he died with a rather small estate and only one son to come after him. It may be that John lacked determination that his brothers showed. He seems constantly changing the place of his plantation. But how can we draw any inferences from so few facts?

We get an entirely different impression when we look at the role that William (1689-1748) played. No account is given of where he was or what he did between 1689 and 1712, when he appears in Baltimore County as the purchaser of a hundred acres in Littleton for which he paid 2500 pounds of tobacco. Did he marry shortly after this transaction? At all events he had a daughter in 1717 whom he named "Elizabeth" after his mother and a son "Daniel" in 1720 named after his father. These two children do not appear in the church records; however, in the records for the parish of St. John and St. George we learn that he married Hannah Dever in 1722. Then comes a long list of children; Hannah 1723, Elnor 1725, William 1727, Solomon 1729, Moses 1731, Aaron 1734, (now we seem to be getting into the New Testament) John 1736. We shall run across the names of these boys again when they enlisted in the Army just before the Revolution.

When Solomon was born, in 1729, his father did a very wise thing. He joined with his younger brother Daniel in taking over "Gresham's Colledge", some 500 acres lying alongside of Littleton. William took 195 acres and Daniel the remaining 305. These 285 acres he evidently worked vigorously for a number of

years, while his children were growing up. Then in 1741 he followed his brother John's example and got 50 acres in "Come by Chance" (if you think that is a curious name, consider these two; also, names of plantations in Harford County, "Love and A Bottle" and "Huggie - Muggie"). He, also, followed brother John in getting 32 acres in that tract with the non-committal name of "Enlargement". By this time he had apparently gathered up the available land in his neighborhood. So again he follows brother John who had a little tract of land about 10 miles to the North along the borders of Deer Creek. William took some 140 acres in 1745 from a tract known as Collins First Shift. These plantations along Deer Creek I have not been able to identify.

This last venture when William was 56 years old would indicate that he was still driving hard to obtain and improve property and to enlarge his estate. His difficulty lay in the fact that his properties were scattered. Perhaps his two boys helped him on the plantation. His eldest boy, Daniel, was now 25 years of age and must have lived in that old house on Gresham's Colledge, for his father willed it to him some three years later. Maybe young William took over the Deer Park enterprise for he lived there some years later.

Apart from the land records the inventory of his estate carries further information about the conditions under which he lived, and his will tells more about his possessions and his personality.

In his will we come across a rather striking thing. In dividing up Gresham's Colledge and Littleton among his boys he mentions a number of orchards and seems anxious that his

sons should share them. When we compare the large area that these orchards covered with the small amount of tobacco, (185 pounds mentioned in the inventory) we can see that William was in the forefront of the movement to find substitutes for tobacco. The apples that were popular at that time were russets, costard, pippens, marigolds, kings and batchelors. Undoubtedly, these orchards went into cider for that was an exceedingly popular drink in all of the Colonies. All through the South, lands that contained orchards were considered the most desirable. Up in Massachusetts a town with 40 families made 3000 barrels of cider and there are records of ministers who stored up 40 barrels for winter use. Many households used it instead of beer which was a most popular drink in both England and the Colonies. In summer they diluted it with water and sweetened it with nutmeg. With water and molasses it made a nice drink for children. Cider and rum made a drink they called "stone-wall". Evidently, there was a very large market for cider.

It also looks as though William was trying to derive some income from his live stock. One item mentions 57 hogs, one year old valued, at 14 pounds and 5 shillings. Another item lists 11 steers at 20 pounds.

Perhaps William's interests ran out in the direction of building materials. He had more nails in his inventory than I have seen in any of the others, and they were valued at over four pounds. He also had 350 feet of poplar plank. Right near Daniel's house a saw mill sprang up on Winter's Run, but at what date I have no idea. If William had a hand in that he had a little gold mine.

Another item in William's inventory is a list of the sums of money that he had loaned his friends and relatives. It amounted to around 75 pounds. One item intrigues me. It was for 6 shillings and 8 pence and had been loaned to William Bradford, who was one of the most prominent men in the County, and who later was the Captain of a militia company in which a number of William's sons enlisted. Notice, William kept a record of this little friendly loan and it was preserved to appear in his inventory. Does that indicate William was off on the miserly side? Certainly not, when we consider the goodly sums he was lending to his sons-in-law.

Something is added to the picture of William when we review the equipment in his house. He was prepared to make his own clothes of linen and of wool, of leather and of doe skin. He was equipped with carpenters and cooper's tools to build his cider casks and of course he had his blacksmith shop. It is a pleasure to note that he had a lot of pewter ware, but no trenchers. Also, he had several tables and a number of chairs. And here is an item of comfort not often listed, a brass warming pan. Perhaps among his luxuries William counted the parcel of old books which he undoubtedly could not read. We should hasten to add that his children and grandchildren could read.

Concerning his religious life, it would seem fair to assume that he must have admired the characters of the Old Testament from the names he selected for the boys. We know that he was connected with the Chapel of St. John and St. George, which was hardly five miles from his home and we have a record

of his signing an oath that he did not believe in the doctrine of "transsubstantion". It does seem strange that there is no mention of a Bible among his effects.

The impression that I obtained from the few facts that we have concerning William is that he was a vigorous, intelligent man, who had originality and initiative. Though he was handicapped in his education, he could keep his accounts straight. He could plan and carry through his projects, and he evidently had foresight and good judgment. When he died his inventory shows that he had over 600 pounds in personal estate which is nearly three times as much as that of the average planter in that period.

Life was kinder to him than to his brother John. William left nine children, all of them lived to grow up into men who enlisted in the Army and women who married. That he was devoted to each one of them seems evident from the way in which he carefully divided his real estate among his sons. Usually, only the eldest son, or the two elder sons inherited the real estate. One wonders if the old gentleman carefully selected the colored slaves which he left to each of his daughters. From such items as these and the many loans he made I would infer that William was not only a practical and successful man, but also one with a kindly and friendly nature.

Alexander McComas, the third brother, was born some time between William (1689) and Daniel (1697). Possibly there were other children in this period, but we have no record of them. In his case we have some suggestion concerning what he did before he joined his brothers in Baltimore

County. He is mentioned as a "house-carpenter" and it is quite probable that he got his start in life in the rapidly growing little town of Annapolis where houses were constantly springing up. One thing we do know is that when he landed in Harford among his brothers he certainly had some money with him. In 1719 he bought a hundred acres of a tract called "Edinburgh", about two miles South of Littleton where William had been for five years. The next year he bought 200 acres of "Horses Range" that cost him about 43 pounds, a small fortune at that time. This tract was very close to Edinburgh, but it was not on Winter's Run nor Bynam's Run. It was watered by a little creek known as "Haha Branch." Its name came down from a legend among the Indians that a young brave killed his sweetheart by this stream. Whether he, or she, cried "haha" seems uncertain but her ghost walked up and down the stream and gave that cry for 200 years,- as any colored boy who passed that stream at night could testify from those days to the present.

Note one thing about these two purchases. They lay on either side of a crude road that ran through the County and that had to be used by travellers going from the Southern Colonies to the Northern. Perhaps Alexander had seen the rapid development around Annapolis and was anticipating the development of this more remote region. That looks like speculation and so does this. In the same year he bought another hundred acres some distance away on the Little Gunpowder River known as "Timber Hills". Possibly, it was well timbered and a saw-mill on the river would make it a splendid speculation. This, too, looks like a speculation.

He picked up a hundred acres in "Macedon", on Winter's Run just above Edinburgh bought in 1721 and sold in 1723. That was a quick turn for real estate in those days. Maybe he burnt his fingers on that one, for we do not find him in the land records for about 20 years, when he sold Edinburgh in 1742. Probably he settled down to hard work with the 400 acres that he had so quickly acquired and which made him one of the largest landholders in the County.

It's a little hard to follow his later deals. He sold a part of Come by Chance in 1749 but we don't know when he bought it. Then we find that he had leases on properties known as Aram's Favor and McComas Meadows in 1756. At some time he bought some property near his brothers in the Deer Creek region. One gets the impression that Alexander was trying his hand at real estate speculation. That would seem natural. Values certainly had risen sharply in Anne Arundel County and they were certainly rising in Baltimore County. Maybe Stephen Gill, who was in a number of real estate deals, talked young Alexander into this. Maybe he got the idea from successful speculators in Anne Arundel County, for we find the mention of property held in Baltimore County by numerous residents in Anne Arundel County. It seems as though it should have been possible to do very well in that sort of speculation. However, Stephen Gill left only 169 pounds, and our Alexander left 248 which was about the average for his times, among the planters.

When he first married is not recorded in the St. John's record. The first entry there states that a daughter Mary was born to Alexander Maccomas and his wife Elizabeth in 1725.

The next entry states that Alexander married Hannah Wittacre, a spinster, in 1728. Then come three boys and five girls.

When we turn to the inventory of his estate we do not get much material for forming an opinion of his home life. We find a mention of a parcel of old books worth 8 shillings. These were probably used by his children as we may assume he could not read, since he could only make his mark for the signature to his will. As usual we find items connected with the spinning of flax and wool and, also, the carpenter's and cooper's tools - There was a parcel of "sydor casks" and tubs worth over 2 pounds. The live stock was of some value and his 3241 pounds of tobacco were worth over 32 pounds. He had but one slave, a man named "Mingo" aged about 50 and valued at 30 pounds.

His will is rather interesting. Its first provision directs that everything shall go to his wife during her life, or until she marries again. It seems that she did marry and did not inherit under this will. That would indicate that Hannah, the spinster, had kept her charm after 33 years of married life. Another item, the first daughter, Mary is specially mentioned and regardless of what the wife might inherit, Mary was to have a cow all of her own.

As usual the real estate was divided among the boys, Aquila, Alexander and Daniel; and then all the children were to have equal shares in the remainder. That included Sarah Rhodes, Elizabeth Norris, Mary Whitaker, Hannah Miles, and Pricilla Simmons. From these odds and ends it is very hard to form any notion of what sort of a man Alexander was. We know that he was a house-carpenter and we know that he did some

surveying. Both of these occupations call for the ability to figure quite accurately. So while he may not have been able to write his name he must have been able to do some mathematical figuring. The way he bought and sold real estate would seem to indicate that along with his ability to do practical things he had a flare for speculation.

Alexander had seven pounds invested in his wearing apparel when he died in 1761. That is a little excessive for a man who left only 248 pounds. His brother Daniel who left over twice as much had wearing apparel valued at one pound, when he died four years later.

The fourth brother was born in 1697 and died in 1765 and it is from him that we are descended. Since his father died when he was only two years old his mother Elizabeth and his three brothers must have seen to it that he got his start in life. He was only thirteen when his eldest brother John gave up the old plantation on the Severn River. However, it seems possible that Daniel may have stayed on, in or near Annapolis, and Elizabeth may have had him serve an apprenticeship with some respectable tradesman, who, in turn for services rendered, guaranteed good care and an education in reading, writing and arithmetic. That was a common practice. At all events he certainly was able to write and, from the two books which we know that he had, we know that he was able to read, and to read some difficult and intricate material.

In 1720 Daniel appears in Baltimore County and buys a piece of property right between brother Alexander's Edinburg and Horses Range, also bordering on Winter's Run and the road

which was to become the Philadelphia Post Road. This was a tract of land which was especially surveyed for Daniel and we must suppose that there were no clearings on it. It was much more level than the plantations further up on Winter's Run. At that time the land had not filled in around Bush River and it is probable that small boats could almost reach his property, which would be a great convenience in shipping tobacco. How Daniel developed this property we do not know, but we do know that he held on to it for 40 years. Possibly, it was successful from the very beginning, for nine years after this purchase he bought 305 acres of Gresham's Colledge, a short distance to the north of Walnut Neck.

Perhaps he was married when he came to the County for we know that he had a son named Daniel who was born in 1721. Then we have no more information about his private life until we read that Daniel McComas married Martha Scott December the 26th 1734. Martha was only 17 years old when she took Daniel for better or for worse on the day after Christmas. Her husband was 20 years older than she. He had a son of 13, a difficult age, whom she had to bring up. However, there's no need to worry about Martha. She was used to hard going. Her grandfather, Daniel Scott, had settled in the County in 1682,- just after her father was born (1680). Both of these men had gradually acquired very large land holdings. We encounter various members of the Scott family in the 18th and 19th centuries. For example one was very prominent in establishing the town of Joppa. Another gave the ground on which Bel Air now stands. In the 19th century a Otho Scott was one of the most brilliant lawyers of his day,

according to Judge Preston's History of Harford County, So Martha came of stalwart and vigorous stock and I infer from the way in which she administered Daniel's estate, after he died, that she was a very capable woman. She was the mother of 9 children and that means that for some 20 years she was either carrying a baby or nursing one in her arms. Add to that physical feat the toil of managing the house with its unending labor. Add to that the fact that she lived for 20 years after her husband died and we cannot help but conclude that she was a strong and efficient wife and mother.

Daniel's first son was named James (1735), possibly as a compliment to King James of England. He became the most distinguished of all of the sons. He rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel in the Army during the Revolution. He was elected to the Convention that met in Annapolis to direct affairs of Maryland while the War was still going on. The first daughter Elizabeth (1737) Daniel named for his mother. The second son, William (1739), was our ancestor and we shall have much to say about him later. The next son was John (1741) and I am inclined to think that he was the John McComas from Maryland who went to Virginia and who surveyed a fort in that State before the Revolution. The next daughter was named Martha (1743) and with her the list of names for Daniel's children in the St. John's registry ends. We get the names of the remaining four children from Daniel's will. There was Aquila who died in 1773, and appointed his "loving Mother, Martha McComas, executrix of his will". When Sarah, his next daughter, was born we do not know, but we do know that she married William Bradford who raised a

company of militia that her brothers and nephews entered. The next two daughters Hannah and Mary we know nothing about.

With ten of Daniel's children and nine of William's living side by side, Gresham's Colledge must have been a lively spot in the 1730s and 40s.

The old registry for St. John's parish tells us more about Daniel than about any of his brothers. Evidently he was quite active in the Church for we find that in 1750 he was appointed as an Inspector and his son Daniel as Church Warden (probably he was the Daniel McComas that married Ann Miles in 1756).

The duties of Inspector included keeping accounts of the church properties, which were often quite valuable. In addition to that he had a peculiar duty at that time. He had to go around among the members of the congregation and get them to sign a test. The following is a copy of the test. "I doe declare that I doe believe that there is not any Transsubstantiation in the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper or in the Elements of bread and wine, at or after the consecration thereof by any person. Witness George Presbury, Inspector, 1749, signature Daniel Maccomas".

Apparently when Daniel had signed the test he took over the duties of an Inspector and had other people sign it.

There is something rather amusing in all of this. For centuries theologians had debated the question of whether the bread and wine used at the Lord's Supper was actually the Body and Blood of Christ. He had said that they were His Body and Blood. Should that be taken literally or symbolically? The Church of Rome said that it must be taken literally and clung to that belief throughout the centuries. The Protestant Churches

debated the question for years and the usual opinion was that Christ spoke figuratively at the Last Supper. However, the debate waxed and waned throughout the years without being settled. These old planters settled it. They simply drew up a test, told you what to believe and made you sign it.

Why should a theological problem flare up in this back woods country? Probably it was stirred up by politics. Ever since Cromwell's time the Protestants in Maryland were afraid of a resurgiance of Catholic influence in Maryland. Some of their measures to prevent that worked considerable hardship upon the Catholics.

We cannot say whether the old Spesutia Church or the Chapel of St. John's had good or bad rectors. Unfortunately, the records of the Vestry Meetings for St. John's have been lost; but many of those for the old Spesutia Church have come down to us and they help us to see the problems of a Colonial Church from the point of view of the vestrymen, who were usually prominent men in the County. They were expected to attend Vestry Meetings. If they didn't they were fined eight dollars. They often had some tricky subjects to handle.

Here are a few excerpts from one meeting. First, they selected some Inspectors for the Swan Creek and for the Rock Creek warehouses. Then they ordered a summons for Abraham Taylor and Martha Whayland "on the Suspicion of illegal Cohabbittion". That case suggested some others. "Will Perkins and Sarah Durbin, on notice given them by Mr. Sheredine and being admonished by the Vestry, agree to separate and remove all cause for further Suspicion". Then orders were issued for

Thomas Wammagham and Ann Soward to appear at the next Vestry on Suspicion of illegal Cohabbittation. Then the Vestry agreed to "petition the Worshipfull Bench of Harford County for an Assessment of 10 pounds of tobacco per poll to be levied on each taxable of said County." Then they considered Mr. Hoffman's account for 7 shillings and 6 pence for mending the pews in the Church. They thought that was too much and they gave him an order on the Sheriff for the sum of 3 shillings and 9 pence,

These few quotations illustrate how the Church acquired property and how it was supported by taxes and how some of the wealthier men in the community managed the finances. Probably all of this was done with good judgment and practically. We cannot help wondering about their strong arm methods in trying to raise the morals of their community.

With this sort of Church life Daniel must have been familiar. After all this was the established church of England and it represented the ideals and traditions of the Mother Church in the Colony. It endorsed a rather rigid social order. The wealthy members were a privileged class and the nobility were considered as of better blood than the rest of mankind. As for the King, in Daniel's time, one of the Governors assured the Colonists that the King ruled by divine right. God and the King were coupled in the minds of these Colonial Englishmen. Their Church was the true Church and based on the Word of God. The Bible was inspired from cover to cover and represented the fundamental truths. To doubt it was to become a pagan, and to doubt the supremacy of the King and his Divine Right was to become a pariah.

In view of all this we are very much surprised to find among Daniel's effects two books that had little mercy on the conventional ideas of religion and politics. One book was titled "The English Liberties" and was published in England about 1680. A second edition came out in 1691. The full title is "English Liberties Or The Freeborn Subjects Inheritance, Containing I Magna Charta, The Petition Right, The Habeas Corpus Act, And Divers Other Most Useful Statutes; With Large Comments On Them. II The Proceedings In Appeals of Murther. The Work and Power of Parliment. Plain Directions for All Persons Concerned in Ecclesiastical Courts. III All Laws Against Conventicles and Protestant Dissenters, With Notes etc by H. Care".

This book I have not been able to find but I assume from the title it is written from the point of view of a liberty loving Englishman who was thoroughly hostile to the efforts of the Crown to rob Parliament and the people of their liberties.

I have read the second book, "The Law of Nature" by J. J. Burlamqui, "Counsellor of State and late Professor of Natural and Civil Law at Geneva". It was first published in 1751 and ran through numerous editions. It was translated into English and in some places it was used as a text book. Voltaire and Russeau were contemporaries of Burlamqui and all three authors show the same disposition to break away from conventional ideas, which they thought were entirely too artificial, and to turn to nature for guidance. However, Burlamqui was a lawyer and put his ideas into logical form and without the literary appeal of the other French writers. I find it a close-knit series of arguments that derive naturally from the author's beginning

axioms. He starts with the assumption that all human beings naturally seek happiness. Then he declares that they are endowed with reason, which can be depended upon to give them the correct conceptions of the world. "Thus we are conducted naturally to the first idea of the word Right, which in its most general sense, and that to which all the particular significations bear some relation, is nothing else but whatever reason certainly acknowledges as a sure and concise means of attaining happiness and approves as such." When a law is right it works toward happiness of the people affected by it. Of course, it is incumbant upon Government to make only those laws that bring happiness to the people. Should the laws be injurious "the first counsel which reason gives us in regard to a malignant power, is to resist and if possible destroy him.... Man cannot acknowledge such a power has a right, on the contrary, he finds himself authorized to leave no measure untried to get rid of so formidable a master, in order to be sheltered from the evils with which he might otherwise be unjustly afflicted".

All of this has a very familiar ring to us today after the lapse of 200 years. It certainly was not familiar to Daniel and his sons. There is no way of finding out how Daniel reacted to these advanced ideas, but we can be confident that they had an enormous influence upon two of his sons James and William, for they became leaders in the movement throughout the Colony in opposing the "malignant power" of England, a few years after Daniel died.

Assuming that Daniel was a thoughtful and intelligent man let us see what his ideas were about managing a plantation.

Evidently he did not follow William in planting orchards for we have no record of anything of that sort. He did have a "syder" cask among his effects, but no coopers tools. He did not go in for building up large numbers of live stock. And he does not seem to have raised Indian corn for sale. It appears that he stuck to tobacco as the main source of his income.

At all events he appears to have succeeded very well in what he did. We have seen that he started with a hundred acres of newly surveyed land in 1720. Nine years later he bought 305 acres from Solomon Wooden. Then in 1745 he bought 201 acres on the south bank of Deer Creek. After the lapse of 10 years he bought 200 acres of Clagett's Forrest, a neighboring property to Gresham's Colledge. All of these purchases, each after the lapse of a number of years, indicate that Daniel was improving his lands and buying new land with his profits.

I feel that I should say something more about those properties that the brothers bought on the south side of Deer Creek but I am reluctant to do so as I know so little about them. I do not know where they were located and I have only the surveyor's reports of their dimensions. Which brother went to this region first is not quite clear, but we find that some 200 acres were surveyed by Alexander and we find Aquila, Alexander's son, living in that neighborhood in a place called Elenders Delight, in 1761. Then we find McComases on properties known as Daniel's Inheritance, and McComas Manor.

Of one thing we can be sure, a large part of this section was known as his Lordship's Reserve and included possibly a thousand acres. It was one of many reserves which the Lord

Proprietor held for later sales. There were quite a number of these when the Revolution started and the Colonists took over the Proprietor's properties.

In 1745 William bought a tract of 100 acres known as "Collin First Shift" and Daniel bought a part of "Ward's Purchase" in 1746, that is described in the Land Records as containing 201 acres and in his inventory as containing 197.

Though we do not know very much about these properties it is interesting to notice that the brothers were still doing what they had done many years before. One brother finds and buys a piece of land that he likes, then the others get properties near him. Sometimes only a short period intervenes between these purchases and sometimes there is a lapse of some years, but these four sons of the old Scotch emigre showed a Scottish clannishness. Though they were evidently unlike in their abilities and personalities they seemed determined to live by each other and I should think from the frequency in which their names occurred together on old documents, to stand by each other.

When we add up the properties that Daniel held in the year 1755 they total over 800 acres. That is an enormous estate. What puzzles me is that in his inventory at the time of his death he only had 2286 pounds of tobacco. That much tobacco could have been grown on less than 50 acres. What can be the explanation? Perhaps he had a much larger return for the year than these figures indicate and they may simply stand for what tobacco he had in storage when he died. Then too it may be that he was cultivating only a small part of his

holdings and retaining the rest as an investment. We know that many planters put their money in land as a sort of insurance and, also, to provide for their children as a legacy.

However, it looks as though Daniel considered slaves a very excellent investment, for over half of his personal estate is invested in slaves, some 316 pounds.

Let us look a little carefully into this matter of Daniel's slaves. He had one man "Solomon", three women, four boys and four girls. What is the explanation of this distribution? We find one old woman named Phillow and a young girl named Phillow. Is the latter a daughter of the former? Was the father, Solomon? Whence came the other children? Were they the offspring of the other two negresses by Solomon or by some men from other plantations, or did Daniel just buy a pack of pickaninnies to hold for rising prices? This is a very repugnant thought to us of today. We would like to think that our ancestors did not buy and sell human beings. But they did. We find scattered records of such sales in that century. In the case of Daniel we have the names of all of his slaves when he died in 1765. In 1776 we have another list made up for the census, and Martha had only three with the same names that we find in Daniel's list. Daniel had given one, Cesar, to his son Aquila and Grace to his daughter Mary, but Aquila had willed Cesar back to his mother and we find him at 16 years of age with the widow, who must have needed him in those War times.

What had become of the others? Had Martha sold them when she settled up Daniel's estate?

We have still another bit of information about these slaves. Their names and ages are given in the census of 1776, they are: Phebe, 35; Cesar, 16; Jacob, 12; Lid, 10; Phillis, 4; Phebe, 1; and Sam for whom no age is given. Then we lose sight of the slaves until Martha made her will in October 1785. Then she gives Liddy to Elizabeth McComas, Phillis to Sarah Bradford, Sam to Martha Amoss and Jacob to Hannah. The faithful old Samson was given his freedom. According to this Martha retained nearly all of the slaves that she had in 1776. If we allow for the death of the two youngest she kept all but one. This and the fact that she gave Samson his freedom may mean that Martha had a kindly feeling toward her slaves.

While we are examining Martha's will let us note a few items. To her daughter Hannah, who was living with her in 1776, and who probably never married, she left a riding mare and saddle and, also, her best bed-furniture, a dozen of her best plates, her best dish, a choice of her iron pots and tea-kettles and a choice of her cows, a large chest and a small chest. Then she gives her little grandson James her youngest colt. And here is a curious bequest; three of the negroes were to be valued and then a quarter of this value was to go to her granddaughter Delileh Carroll. After her debts were paid the remainder of her estate was to be divided among her 8 children.

Frankly, I do not see how we of today can learn much about Daniel's idea of slaves and how he treated them, but it does seem apparent that they were an important part of a man's wealth and it also seems that Daniel knew this and so had provided well for his widow who survived him by 20 years.

A review of the items in his inventory does not tell us anything more than the usual story of a well-to-do planter of his period. We note that he had the spinning wheels and looms and, also, some supplies of thread, the usual devices for preparing the wool and flax and "stillards for weighing". There were the usual iron pots, hooks and flesh forks. It is gratifying to notice that he had a supply of tables, chairs, and a desk; and, also, table linen and pewter ware (no silver). A few items catch the eye. He had a pair of tobacco tongs. These light tongs were used to pick an ember out of the fire place and to light one's pipe. Then, there was a candle box for making candles out of tallow and grease. However Daniel did not have a complete plantation outfit comparable to that of his brother William.

When we turn from the inventory to Daniel's will it also makes a rather poor comparison. When William died he saw to it that each of his sons had a good piece of property, of that we can be quite sure. I recently paged through a "Debt Book" for the year 1759 in which the Lord Proprietor kept an account of the taxes paid on all of his property. I found the four sons who had been given some 50 acres each of Gresham's Colledge were paying their 2 shillings 5 pence on each property. The other sons were paying 3 shillings seven and a half pence for their 90 acres. This means that all of William's sons had kept their inheritances and were developing them.

Daniel had much more land to distribute than William but he did not distribute it in anything like such an equitable way. He left the 305 acres of Gresham's Colledge to James and

then he left the 197 acres of land in Ward's Purchase to be divided equally between his sons John and Daniel. He left no land to William McComas (our ancestor) or to Aquila, though he did remember Aquila with the slave, Cesar. He showed a little favoritism in giving his daughter Mary a slave, Grace. After these bequests, all of his ten children were to share equally in the remainder. When Martha made her first distribution in 1767 William received 19 pounds 5 shillings three and a half pence and at that time the total estate was valued at 577 pounds 8 shillings 8 and one quarter pence. William certainly got a very small part of the parental estate.

Maybe clear thinking old Daniel did not think so highly of our ancestor William. Maybe you won't either after you have read the next chapter.

From this will which Daniel made when he was about 68 years old we may infer that he was a man of strong likes and dislikes; from his inventory, that he was capable and prosperous. The Church records would show that Daniel had that religious strain that appears so often in our family's line. His reading would argue that he was an intelligent and thinking man. Perhaps he foresaw something of the future of the Colony and the inevitable clash between the old world and the new.

REVOLUTIONARY TIMES

It will make the part our ancestors played more intelligible and more interesting if a little historical background is sketched into the picture. In the year that Daniel died England showed her attitude toward her Colonies in a way that no one could mistake. She had often annoyed them by selfish measures, calculated to benefit herself rather than her people over-seas. Early in the century she forbade them to develop their own iron mines. Then she retracted when they began shipping iron to England. She would not permit them to make their own currency. She objected to their growing their own wool and cotton to make their own garments, as that would lessen the demand for English textiles. After the French and Indian War she insisted that the Colonies be specially taxed to defray the expenses incurred in taking Canada from the French. Various plans were made to get money from the struggling Colonies, but they would agree to none of them. Then the Colonies were cut off from commerce with the French and Spanish Islands, to divert that trade to England. Finally in 1765 came the Stamp Act. That touched off the fireworks.

England commissioned Deputies to sell the stamped paper to the Colonies and passed laws that required their use on mortgages, deeds, wills, insurance policies, clearance papers for ships, legal papers of almost every kind, written contracts, business papers, periodical publications and advertisements.

All of the Colonies resented and resisted the use of the stamps. Maryland was particularly outraged by the whole thing. She flatly refused to use the stamps in any way. One, Zachariah Hood, a Marylander, had been commissioned a Deputy and he sought to sail his ship with a cargo of goods and a consignment of stamps into the Annapolis harbor. That was a bad mistake. Indignant citizens would not let him tie his ship to the wharf. Hood slipped away and put his ship in a less conspicuous harbor and then tried to sell his cargo at a reduced price. That did not work either. No one would buy his stuff and a mob tore down the house where he planned to store it. They frightened him so badly he slipped off to New York. That should have ended the incident, surely. But it did not. Since he was a native of Maryland it was felt that he had sold out his own people to curry favor with England. Some determined men followed him to New York, caught him, took him to a Justice of the Peace and made him adjure by solemn oath the office of Deputy, to which he had been appointed by England.

This resentment and indignation was so intense that England cancelled the Stamp Act, and proceeded to impose a direct import tax on glass, lead, paper, paint, oil, wine and tea. Again the temper of the Colonies flared up and they determined to boycott English goods and to pay no taxes that they did not originate themselves. Histories of the United States, including that of Woodrow Wilson, throw the spot-light on what happened in the Massachusetts Bay but do not throw a flicker of light on what

happened in the Chesapeake Bay when England insisted upon landing the East India Company's tea on her shore. It is true, Boston put on a good show. She dressed a number of young men like Indians and they quietly pushed the bales of tea into Boston Harbor. Maryland managed things differently. A Mr. Anthony Stewart owned a brig, "The Peggy Stewart". She sailed into Annapolis Harbor to deliver her cargo of goods which also contained a few bales of tea consigned to the Thomas Williams Company. To avoid any trouble Mr. Stewart payed the tax on the tea himself. That was the finishing touch. To think that a native Marylander would align himself in any way with the Crown, in this bitter struggle, was intolerable. At a public meeting Mr. Stewart and the consignees offered to burn the tea. That sort of appeasement did not satisfy the outraged feelings of his fellow Colonists. Mr. Charles Carroll of Carrollton advised him to burn the ship and the tea. Stewart and the consignees sailed the ship over to Windmill Point. Ran her aground and burnt her to the water level.

Of all the Colonies not one was more determined, or more active, in the effort to get fair treatment from their Motherland than Maryland.

Massachusetts deserves the credit for starting an intelligent and unified action among all the Colonies. She established "Committees of Correspondence" throughout the Country. Every town and hamlet had its group of patriots who kept in touch with Boston and each other. They conferred and discussed

measures to bring England to terms and how to get the cooperation of all the people in refusing to accept imports from England.

One of these "Committees" sprang up in the little village of Bush, or Harford Town, at the head of the Bush River and on the Post Road between Philadelphia and the South. It was only a short distance from the McComas Plantations. As the village boasted two good taverns, travellers between Northern and Southern Colonies often put up there. It is mentioned twice in Washington's "Diary". From the surrounding County the farmers and planters would frequently drop in the tap room and welcome the travellers. This may account for the interest which this Committee had in what was occurring throughout the land and, also the information they had about what was happening in Boston. Judge W. W. Preston in his History of Harford County, from which I have derived much of my material for this chapter, paints a lively picture of men like Washington, Jefferson and Patrick Henry being met by the leading men of the County and discussing the tense situation which was working toward a crisis. We are really carried back to the very atmosphere of the times before the Revolution actually started when we read the minutes of the "Committee" that met in Harford Town in the Court House. This was the Court House for Harford County which had been separated off from Baltimore County in 1773.

In a special meeting held on a Thursday, December the 8th, 1774, Mr. Aquila Hall was elected chairman. Just a word about

Mr. Hall. He was a live wire. In 1762 he was the sheriff of the County. In 1763 he was elected to the House of Delegates and was instrumental in getting Harford County established as a County. In 1775 he organized a militia company, later he became a colonel. He was one of the wealthiest planters in the County. His beautiful old brick house, "Sophia's Dairy" is still standing today near the old Post Road up which he travelled to the Committee meetings in Harford Town.

At this special meeting he had a tough nut to crack. William Young had bought 150 pounds of tea in Baltimore and it was decidedly against the principles and the practice of the whole Colony to buy this taxed tea. Young claimed that he had a certificate which stated that no tax had been paid on the tea by anyone. The Committee finally decided that Mr. Young's "fair and open and candid behavior" plus the certificate made everything all right. No tax had been paid.

At the next meeting December 22nd, 1774, there were many more men present, - a group that included many of the most prominent men in the County. Among them were John Paca whose son had been educated in London and who became a famous lawyer and a signer of the Declaration of Independence; Richard Dallam, who became a Paymaster General in the War; Dr. John Archer, a graduate of Princeton, elected to Congress in 1800 and 1802; the wealthy Judge William Smithson; Thomas Bond, editor of the "Christian Advocate" and a number of the representative planters. The first item of business was very important. Boston was being blockaded by a British Fleet. Her people were being robbed of their means to earn a living. Some were suffering real hardship.

So they appointed a committee of men who lived in different parts of the County to canvass their neighbors and get money, tobacco, or produce, and to return their contributions to Mr. Aquila Hall.

Then they issued a summons to bring John Wilson before them so that he might explain what he meant by spreading a pamphlet throughout the countryside that would tend to disunite the Colonies.

Finally, they made Mr. Robert Trimble explain that the tea found in his possession had gotten into the country without paying a tax.

At the meeting on January 23rd, 1775, they had John Wilson before them with his pamphlet "Friendly Address". When they cross-examined him he maintained that he had only read it to his father, Mr. William Wilson, and only a small part of it at that. Then they went for Mr. William Wilson. The old man said his son had read to him out of some book, he did not know the name of it and could not remember anything he had heard. Then the Committee changed their tactics and charged him with selling gunpowder which was "an infringement on the fourth article of the Provincial Congress". The old man had to admit the sale of the gunpowder but said he had misunderstood the resolution of the Congress.

From this incident it would seem that this Committee was already expecting a call to arms and the necessity for obtaining powder. Then came their really important business. A committee of many of the most prominent men in the County was appointed to "draw up an association for embodying the militia of this

County agreeable to the resolve of the Convention and to bring in a draft thereof."

It was, also, resolved to spread advertisements throughout the County to acquaint the people with the "association" and to urge them to attend a meeting when the drafting committee could be enlarged.

Then they proceeded to select men to canvass their own sections of the County in order to obtain aid for Boston and money for arms. They divided the County into regions with six men to cover each region. For upper Bush River there were "Abram Whitaker, Mordecai Amoss, William McComas (of Daniel) William Bosley and David Bell." James McComas was in a region known as lower Bush River but he does not seem to have been appointed on this committee.

The instructions to the members of the committee are interesting. They were to "wait on each inhabitant within each particular district and request some free gift either for the relief of the Poor of Boston or for the purchase of Arms and Ammunition for the defense of our Lives, Liberties and Properties and make a report thereof to the committee and also to make a return of such men (if any) who dead to every feeling of humanity and all sense of their own danger refuse to give anything to either of the above purposes." William and his associates obtained promises of 10 pounds and 10 shillings for the Poor of Boston and 9 pounds 12 shillings and 6 pence for Arms and Ammunition. The Committee to draft recruits for the militia felt that it was too small for the job and recommended that a

larger committee be formed, with 10 men from each division of the County. This was done and we find William McComas in the Upper Bush River group and James in the Lower.

Then this drafting committee got right to work; they got a paid secretary, adopted parliamentary rules and made 15 members a quorum. Their recruits were, of course, both officers and privates. Occasionally, they found that a division had more officers than privates in a company. Then the whole company had to be disbanded and a new company formed and new officers elected. If any man was absent twice from roll call, without an excuse, his name was publicly advertised in his division. Last but far from least no company could meet where liquor was sold. More than that, no man could bring a bottle with him.

On March the 22nd, 1775, this "Committee of Correspondence" voted on a declaration that has become famous as a First Declaration of Independence fully a year before the National Declaration. It came about in this way. Delegates had gone to conventions in Annapolis and, also, to the Congress in Philadelphia. They had endorsed the measures passed in those meetings, and some of those measures were dangerously drastic. Now what? Were they to be considered fire-brands, or hot-heads, who had gone along on their own initiative apart from and in defiance of the people whom they were supposed to represent? There were 34 of the leading men in the County at that meeting. Their names appear subscribed to this Declaration which runs as follows: -

"We the Committee of Harford County having most seriously and maturely considered the Resolves and Association of the

Continental Congress and the Resolves of the Provential Convention, do most heartily approve of the same, and we esteem ourselves in a more particular manner, instructed by our Constituents to see them Carried into Execution and we do most Solemnly pledge ourselves to Each Other and to Our Country and engage ourselves by every tie held sacred to mankind. To perform the Same at the Risque of our Lives and Fortunes."

After we recover from the surprise at the way those old timers used capital letters and punctuation; the intent, determination and high courage of their statement begin to take effect. These men used almost the same words that Jefferson used a year later, - "and for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor".

To quote Judge Preston "The Committee of Harford County was not in any sense a mass meeting. Its members were duly elected by the 10,000 white people of the County; the 34 names signed to the resolution were the leading men of the new County and their descendents are justly proud of this signal evidence of the courage and patriotism of their ancestors".

About here I should say that the name of James McComas appears among these leaders in the cause for Liberty; but William, our ancestor was not present at the meeting.

Having got that declaration on record they read a letter from the Baltimore Committee of Correspondence. Here was some real trouble. Heaven knows the Colony needed salt badly enough, but what to do about it, when the salt came from England?

Apparently Dr. John Stevenson needed it, wanted it and took it. But it had been prohibited by the Association of the Continental Congress. So the Committee said every handful of salt must go over-board. Dr. Stevenson ingeniously and ingenuously suggested that the salt came over as ballast in the ship and should be landed as ballast. The hard-boiled Committee said "No!" So the skipper secretly loaded part of his cargo on smaller craft and set sail for Halifax. Now, where were those smaller craft? Evidently beating around the Chesapeake looking for rivers to slip into and unload. So the Committee of Harford County had to be on the look-out for these boats. At their next meeting it was stated that Dr. Stevenson's salt was being unloaded on the Bush River, just opposite Walnut Neck, that Daniel had bought 45 years before. That stirred everybody up and Captain George Bradford and two others made it their business to get to the bottom of the matter. They found salt, all right, but they could not trace it back to Dr. Stevenson.

About this time another doctor got into trouble, and very strange trouble it was. It was "for violating a Resolution of the Provential Convention in Killing a Lamb dropt after the first day of May" and the two Committee men who made the accusation were John Dallam and James McComas. Lambs were being conserved as a provision against future trouble.

Much more important than one small lamb was the problem of getting food to the hungry people in Boston. Upon motion it was ordered that Aquila Hall who was treasurer of the Committee and who was selling "French Burrn Middlings" at

15 shillings a hundred pounds should buy as much as he could with the money entrusted to him. (Poor Aquila, he laid himself wide open in that deal.)

Then they decided it was about time to see what was developing from the draft. Captains were instructed to get their recruits together for a review when and where it "was most convenient for them". Imagine that, - waiting on the convenience of the recruit! But remember, these men were inexperienced in such matters and they knew it was Spring and these recruits were farmers and planters.

At the meeting on May 1st, 1775 the news from Boston must have been common knowledge, though the minutes say nothing about it. Lexington and Concord had been fought and the British General, Gage, had invited all the Bostonians who wanted to get out of the City, to get out. He would give them passes. Perhaps this news accounts for the large number that attended the meeting. Both James and William McComas were there. Perhaps, the news was slow getting to them, for one of their first motions was to buy three horses to forward the expresses, two to stand at Harford Town and one at Susquehanna.

Those "Embattled Farmers" at Concord aroused different emotions throughout the 13 Colonies. In Maryland and Virginia the patriotic reaction was intense. This intensity can be seen in the conduct of the Harford Committee on Correspondence. They met three times in the first week of May 1775. At the third meeting they appointed another committee which was to visit each "hundred" in the County and see to it that two men were

elected from each hundred to attend a conference in Annapolis. The minutes on their books reads, "as the Time is Critical and the Cricis may be Perelous it is Desired that Such Person be Chosen be out of the most Substancial and Knowing Men in the Hundreds, and voted on by the majority of persons in each Hundred Qualified to vote at Elections".

James McComas was on the committee to supervise the elections and when they counted the votes on May 17th he was chosen as representative to the conference for lower Bush River. William did not make the grade, but from this time on James is in the thick of it with the other "Substancial and Knowing Men"- Perhaps William was as knowing as James, but he could hardly have been as substantial, in view of Daniel's will.

At their meeting on May 25th they had three letters to read. Each was a headache. One, from Philadelphia, called off the Provincial Convention at Annapolis. One, from Baltimore, disclosed the annoying information that several ships from Liverpool were cruising around the Bay and getting small boats to slip their cargoes of dry-goods and salt ashore, in out-of-the-way places. Harford County was urged to be alert. A second letter from Baltimore seemed innocent but it started something. It was addressed to Aquila Hall and stated that the 70 bushels of flour that he had sent to Baltimore for the Poor in Boston had been sold, but they had no hard money in the City and could not pay out any for several days. Then there were four barrels

that they were confused about.

As anyone might have guessed Aquila could easily get into trouble acting a treasurer for the committee and, also, as the agent to buy and sell for the benefit of the fund.

The trouble did not appear at the meeting on June the 1st when there was only a small turnout but all members were urged to be on hand a week later.

Then a Dr. Robert Lemmon caused a little explosion before the largest committee meeting they ever had. James was there but not William. The Doctor charged Aquila Hall with paying 15 shillings for "Middling Flower", when fine "Burr Flower will not sell for so much in Baltimore". This over payment for the flour he declared would disgust people and would ruin their Committee's efforts with the public. He added "and if it should reach the Provincial Assembly how dispicable it would appear.... If we act for the publick good, if we mean to relieve our suffering Brethern let it be done to as much advantage as the poor pittance will allow.... We accepted the trust- our honor is at stake,- our constituents look for faithfulness in us."

One can imagine the uproar, when the clerk finished reading such a letter. After things quieted down a little, Dr. Lemmon got in a statement that he had "no intention of passing a reflection on this committee or Mr. Aquila Hall." Now, who could believe that! What did James and the rest of the planters think? Form your own conclusions. Here are the next two items on the minutes: -

"Resolved, that as Mr. Aquila Hall declines acting any

longer as a treasurer, Mr. Richard Dallam be appointed in his room, and that Mr. Hall be ordered to produce his Accounts before the Next Committee.

"Resolved that Mr. Aquila Hall confessing his sorrow for misbehaving before this committee by striking Dr. Lemmon, is deemed satisfactory to this committee."

Two weeks later Aquila still had not yet got his accounts ready for inspection and was allowed another week.

At a meeting on June 22nd, 1775 they resolved that they would not take any steps "to remove the seat of justice from Harford Town" as it might "lay the Foundation for Discord and Division among us". They felt that they were living in dangerous times and that they should concentrate their efforts toward one great purpose. They stated that they needed "the greatest Union and Harmony --- to repel and prevent every Design and Attempt to enslave us."

We can imagine that James voted for this resolution as Harford Town was much nearer his plantation than Bel Air.

The temper of the men on the Committee may be gauged by the action they took at the meeting on July the 21st, 1775, at which both James and William were present. Three men were reported to have "Spoken Contemptuous Words" about the Committee. They were summoned to appear and explain themselves. Their reply seems to be that they did not realize what they had done. One said that he spoke in the heat of passion but is now sorry and will respect the resolves of the Continental Congress and the Provincial Convention. On one occasion they brought in

a recalcitrant citizen "with a file of Musquiteers". These determined men were not going to have a Fifth Column in Harford County.

James seems to have been the most energetic member of the family in these activities. He went to the deferred convention at Annapolis and there it was voted to replace the Committees of Correspondence, by Committees of Observation. James was promptly elected to this new committee.

Throughout the fall and winter of 1775 this Committee met frequently and was busy collecting money for the Poor of Boston and for arms and ammunition. In the Spring of 1776 they made a strenuous effort to collect arms, powder and lead. They continued to send armed men throughout the County to bring in anyone suspected of disloyalty and they even voted that the ministers in the Church of England should refrain from mentioning the King or Queen in the morning or evening prayers.

We find James and William on a committee that went through the County obtaining signed pledges of allegiance to the cause. Some old papers have come down to us which report the sort of annoyances that James and William had to contend with among the inhabitants who would not sign. Of 14 of these "Non-Associators" four refused to sign because of religious scruples. One said he would not sign because it was a "mystery" to him. One said his reason was "I don't choose to", and another because he did not "understand the matter". Some were afraid that they might get into trouble as one put it "I fear it would fetch me into a scrape", and another put it "I may fetch on myself that I cannot

go through". One could not read or write and was determined that he was not going to sign anything, and another said blankly that he did not "choose to fight for liberty and never will". Another would not sign but said he would be willing to fight if he did not have to fight on land. Another simply refused and remarked that it was "by no reason I can give". The next man refused to sign but he did have some reasons. He said he would not sign because Congress did not sign. He said that if England "gained the day then the Congress and the great people will turn the scale and say the commonality of people forced them to stand in opposition to the English".

It seems very strange that in the two meetings of the Committee on July the 1st and July the 8th, 1776, not a word appears on the minutes concerning the momentous events occurring at Philadelphia. Instead their minutes deal with the getting and repairing of muskets and the ransacking of the countryside for powder and shot.

In November the term of office for the Committee on Observation ran out. As usual James was re-elected and he was faithful in his attendance up until March 1777, when it would seem that he must have been on duty in the Army. Though James was apparently much more active than William in those critical times in his attendance upon meetings and helping in the planning, we must concede that when there was some dirty work to do William was on hand; for example, in going around the countryside collecting contributions for the Poor of Boston and for Arms and Ammunition; and in that other disagreeable

job of getting his fellow countrymen to sign their allegiance to the cause or have their names reported as contemptible Tories.

We have mentioned the determination of the Committee on Correspondence to recruit men throughout the County to form militia companies. Evidently they were very successful. Just what these companies did in the Revolutionary War I have been unable to determine. Certainly, some of the men must have been in that famous battle on Long Island when the Maryland Line held back the British and enabled the regiments of other Colonies to make good their retreat to Manhattan Island.

It so happens that the careers of only two members of the McComas family can be followed, James who was probably the oldest member of the family and Aaron who was certainly the youngest. One reason for this may be that when the British burned Washington in 1814 they destroyed a number of records of the soldiers of the Revolutionary War.

It is interesting to record the names of the sons of the Four Brothers who enlisted in the Harford militia. The only son of John, who was named Alexander, was born in 1721 does not appear in the list. William had two sons, Daniel and Aaron and we do not find their names, but we do find his sons Moses, John and Solomon and his grandson Aaron. As for Alexander, his son Aquila does not appear but his son Alexander does with his son Alexander Junior, and also a grandson Edward along with a son John, who was born in 1739. Our ancestor, Daniel, had two boys who were not represented; but the two who were, James and William

were more active than all the others put together.

Let us follow the fortunes of the two about whom we happen to have some information.

On the 30th of September 1775 Solomon (son of William) then aged 46 and his son Aaron aged 15 had joined Captain Bradford's militia company number 13. There were 6 of the McComases in this company. They were not there because they liked the number 13. They were there because Captain Bradford had married one of Daniel's daughters Sarah, and they evidently knew him very well.

What went on by way of training to get these countrymen in condition to become soldiers may well be guessed. It must have been a task. We are told that the old Army cry "Hay-foot, Straw-foot" goes back to this period. These country boys could not get clearly into their heads which foot was right and which foot was left so the officers tied a little bunch of straw on one foot and a bunch of hay on the other. However, there was one thing that the officers did not need to teach these boys and that was how to shoot.

In the Veterans' Bureau in Washington I ran across this letter from Aaron to his father Solomon: "Trap in Newcastle County April 26th 1778. Dear Father; I embrase this Opportunity to let you know that I am well, hoping these may find you and all the rest in the Same. I have nothing material to write as we lay here two or three miles from the Enemies' Shipping but how long I know not, not when we shall get home, the enemy land often and sometimes carry of stock, and a few days ago carried

off four Men of the Inhabitants. I see in Midletown about 40 Tories, Taken by the Lower Militia with Cloudy Slow their Leader, they mostly all enlisted in the Regular Service with our Men. I should be glad if you could send me a pair of shoes, and a pair of Trowsers.

"I add no more at present but remain Your Ever Dutiful Son.

Aaron McComas"

It so happens that we have an account of Aaron's military adventures in a sworn statement by him in the year 1835 when at the age of 75 he was applying for a pension. He stated that "he entered the service of the United States in the month of October toward the latter part of the said month in the year 1777 in the company commanded by Captain William Bradford belonging to regiment number 42 of the Maryland Militia commanded by Colonel James McComas, and marched on the first day of April 1778 to the head of the Elk in Cecil County. From whence he was marched to Middle Town, and thence to the Trap in Newcastle County in the State of Delaware where he was honorably discharged in June 1778. That part of the time he served in the company commanded by Captain John Rogers of the Maryland Militia in the regiment commanded by Colonel Francis Holland. That he was again drafted in the year 1799 into the company commanded by Captain John Day for two months and joined the regiment commanded by Colonel James McComas, and marched on the first day of April to the shores of the Chesapeake Bay in

Harford County to guard the same from the enemy where they lay in the Chesapeake, and served two months in this service "making in all nine months of service which he rendered to the United States in the years 1777, 1778 and 1779."

In his testimony he explains that he is an old man and in bad health and in much need of the pension. However, he did not get a pension as he had not served long enough in the Army to obtain one.

If I had not happened to run across these papers of Aaron's applying for a pension I should never have known anything about James career in the Army beyond the fact that in 1775 he was a Second Lieutenant in Militia Company number 2 of Harford County.

A bit of history will help to explain what James was doing with his regiment around the head of the Chesapeake Bay. In August of the year 1777 the English General, Howe, had sailed up the Chesapeake Bay with over 200 ships, landed at the head of the Elk, beaten Washington in the battle of the Brandywine and marched into Philadelphia. There he stayed until June 1778. Evidently he was getting his supplies from ships in the Chesapeake and it must have been James' assignment to harrass the enemy and obstruct his movements and especially to prevent any forays into the towns and country around the Bay. After the English left Philadelphia it must have been necessary to keep some regiments on duty around the Chesapeake, as the English had adopted a policy of raiding the Coast line from Main to South Carolina.

After the fighting had died out in New York and New Jersey and had moved into the South, James resigned from the Army and put his efforts into planning for the future of the War and the Government of Maryland. He was elected to the Assembly in Annapolis, a job that called for intelligence and ingenuity. These men were establishing precedents for a new type of Government. In addition to that, they were trying to steer their state during an exhausting, baffling and perilous War.

On June 16th, 1780 the men in the General Assembly showed the stuff they were made of. They were trying to collect money for the Army and they determined to set the pace by contributions which they would make themselves. Forty names with their pledges were recorded and Charles Carroll of Carrollton gave 4 hogshead of tobacco and James gave only one, but I imagine he felt his contribution pinched him more than Charles Carroll's did him. After his term in the Assembly James returned to his plantation on Gresham's Colledge.

The census taken in 1776 gives us a sketchy picture of James' family and their ages at that time. The report runs,- James McComas aged 40; wife Elizabeth, 30; son William, 14; son James Jr., 12; son Josiah, 10; daughter Martha, 6; daughter Elizabeth, 4; daughter Susannah, 2; and son Nathaniel, 2 months.

A list of the slaves with their quaint names gives a little background to the picture. They were: Buck aged 20, Jack 10, Tommy 10, Dinah 35, Lidea 25, Cas 13, Salt 9 and Nid 2.

Just how the Colonel's family made out during the hard years of the War was a problem. Here were a number of young children that needed care. Perhaps Elizabeth with the help of Dinah and Lidea could manage that all right, but who was to care for the plantation? Three hundred acres is quite a tract to cultivate and there was only the negro, Buck, aged 20 and the boy William, aged 14, to manage things. Martha did not live far away and she may have loaned her "Samson" but that does not leave us much better off in our speculation. Perhaps, they raised only enough food to carry them along during the War years. We do not know much about James' activity after he left public office. We do know that he got into some undertakings which got him into debt, which his heirs had to assume.

When he died in 1791 his personal estate was valued at 445 pounds. His inventory shows that his wearing apparel was worth some 12 pounds and the bedding worth 48 pounds. Then occur those numerous things that were common to these plantations, but we find some things which seem rather new in the general run of inventories. For example, there is a clock worth 15 pounds and a watch worth 6 pounds. Then there was a high case of drawers, some rush bottom chairs and an arm chair.

These few glimpses at what James had in his home, that he had inherited from Daniel, and his nine children give us some idea of what life meant to James. Back in 1776 he had seven children and Nathaniel was an infant. Then James was off to the War. In 1782 he had a daughter Mary and in 1785 a son Josiah. Probably this was a healthy family for we read about the doings

of the sons in the land records later on and we know that all of the girls grew to maturity, for we have their married names.

From what we have learned about James it would appear that he was a man with a great deal of energy and ability. In a short time he rose from the grade of Second Lieutenant to Lieutenant Colonel. Evidently he must have had some personality and considerable ability in expressing his ideas, or he would not have had so successful a political career. In short, when he died, a comparatively young man at the age of 54, he was probably known as a "Knowing and Substancial Man".

On the brass marker that indicates the spot where the Harford Declaration of Independence was signed his name appears as "McComass." This original spelling, also, appeared in a law book owned by him which we possessed some years ago and which, very unfortunately, has been lost.

It is time now to turn from the career of James to that of his younger brother William. In 1760 he married one of his mother's nieces, Elizabeth Scott, and by her he had 4 boys and 3 girls. As William did not take the trouble to register the names of his children in St. John's Chapel, the way his father Daniel had done, the only record we have is the list of their names in his will. The dates of their births are guesses. They were George William, born 1761; Thomas Jefferson, 1763; Sabra, 1765; Frederick, 1767 (from whom we are descended); Cassandra Anderson, 1769; Cordelia Anderson, 1771; and Martha, 1773. When we turn from this record of the growth of his family

to the land records of the growth of his real estate we run into some things that are a little hard to understand. It seems from the Records that was when he was only 22 years of age he bought 40 acres of Daniel's Inheritance up in the Deer Creek region. That seems like quite an achievement for such a young man. What can we make of this entry? In 1769 he bought 95 acres of Ward's Purchase, which should have been pretty well cultivated, since his father bought it in 1746. This he bought from his brother Daniel. From his brother John he bought a hundred more acres, from the same plantation, in 1774, for 100 pounds.

William had these 235 acres in cultivation when the War broke out. His holdings were in the Northern part of the County and he was referred to as being in the "Upper Bush Hundred".

We have seen all that the records now give us concerning his efforts in the Revolution. At first he is mentioned as a private in Captain Bradford's Company. In the Maryland Archives there are two references to him as a Captain of a Militia Company in Harford County. That leaves his record as a soldier entirely in the dark.

In the year the War ended, 1783, he was a member of a Petit Jury and in 1789 he appears as a Road Commissioner. He had charge of the road that runs from Jerusalem Mills over to Winter's Run, where he grew up as a boy. This must

have been a sweet road to keep in condition in those times. It had no level places in it,- all hills and some of them were coated with red clay.

His wife Elizabeth died after bearing him those 7 children and he married Hannah Bond Onion in 1785. She was the widow of Zacchaeus Onion who had inherited a large estate from his uncle. Some idea of that estate can be had by one item in the debt book for the year 1757 when Hannah married Zacchaeus. The taxes amounted to over 21 pounds at a time when 3 shillings, 7 pence were being paid for 90 acres of Littleton. The largest tract ran from 17 to 19 hundred acres. Some idea of his personal estate may be had when we read Hannah's will, 1793, for in it is mentioned a great many pieces of silver which she left to her children.

William and Hannah had 18 children between them before they married each other. There were no more blessings after their wedding.

They, and I suppose as many of the children who were under age, lived in a splendid, stone mansion near the Little Gunpowder River. It still stands, is occupied and well cared for. Evidently it was one of the finest homes in the County in the 18th Century. You can still see the evidences of the care and the good taste that went into its building. One thing that intrigued me was the long road which wound around in front of the house in a leisurely way and was protected from earth washing in from the high ground along its sides by a wall of flat stones piled above each other with no cement between them.

There it has remained for some 200 years. From the porch one can look out over ten acres of receding land to the woods on all sides.

It doesn't take much imagination to picture this grand, old house swarming with children. We know they had many horses and the girls were fond of riding. There must have been a lively time getting them off to school and seeing that they left early enough to reach the little school in Franklinville by the time it opened.

What was going on, financially, after this marriage is a matter for conjecture. The land records for several years are filled with accounts of sales. These are evidently portions of the estate that Zacchaeus had left.

This home of William's was not far from Gresham's Colledge where his brother James was living. Perhaps, there was not a very kindly feeling on William's part. When James died, in 1791, we find this item in the records, James appointed his two brothers John and William executors for his estate. They both refused to accept the duty.

In 1797 after Hannah had been dead for 4 years William married a lady by the name of "Mary McComas", but I cannot find out where she belonged on the family tree. Evidently, William was a robust, old gentleman for we find him getting the job of County Constable after Aaron had put up a bond for him of $800. Five years after that the old gentleman died (1815).

It may seem a pity to wind up this brief account of William on a sour note but I found this item in the land records and you may judge for yourself just how sour the note is.

"Indenture, 21st of August 1805, between William McComas, Senior Constable of Harford County and James McComas (Justice of the Peace) witneseth that on September 4th 1802 a certain writ of fiere facias was issued by James McComas Justice of the Peace to the said William McComas Constable, reciting that Nicholas Ellender by the judgement of the said James McComas recovered against a certain William McComas, Jr., son of Daniel (this was a grandson of old William Maccomas) to the sum of two pounds 6 shillings and 10 pence. The said Constable was commanded that the goods and chattels lands and tenements of the said William McComas Jr., being in his Bailiwick he should cause to be levied the debt and costs to be rendered to the said Nicholas Ellender; and, whereas, the said writ came into the hands of the Constable in pursuance of the command therein contained, the said Constable laid the same upon parts of the two tracts of land, the one called Gresham's Colledge and the other called Clagget's Forest, in which the said William McComas Jr., was entitled to one fifth part. Whereas, after due notice being given of same the Constable did on the 13th of September 1802 expose the said undivided fifth part of the tracts of land, taken in execution of the said writ, to public sale to the highest bidder. James McComas became the highest bidder and purchaser of the said undivided fifth part for the sum of $50 and he hath since paid the said Constable and is desirous of obtaining title to the land." William delivered the title to James.

The unfortunate William in this episode got caught in a

snow storm one night and froze to death. Aaron was executor of his little estate, that amounted to some $36. The last we know of William we get from the census of 1810, which reported him as a resident of Abingdon. We know that when the British came up the Chesapeake Bay in 1814 that the residents of Abingdon fled back into the inner parts of the County. My Grandmother often told me as a boy how her brother carried her on horse back, when she was a baby two years old, out of the town of Abingdon to escape the British. So it would seem that old William got another taste of the British just before he died, in 1815.

FREDERICK AND SUSANNAH

In this chapter we reach a place on the family tree where it is most difficult to find anything on the two persons that link the 18th and the 19th Centuries. Concerning Frederick we have no record of his birth or his death. We know that he was the son of Captain William McComas because his name appears in William's will, where he is cut off with a shilling. The marriage records show that he was married in 1789 to Susannah Onion, who was something of an heiress. In the Land Records for the 1790s we have quite a number of entries showing how Frederick and Susannah were selling off property that she had inherited. We have one item that Frederick and his cousin Corbin Onion undertook a business of some sort, but it came to grief and Corbin had to sell some of his property to pay their debts. Probably, Frederick and Susannah were living in Harford County as late as 1810, for there is a court record in which they appear at that time and their residence is given as Harford County. In the Baltimore Directory for 1814 and 15 there is a Frederick McComas at number 1 Comet Street. Number 1, of that date, is not standing; but the other houses in the block are in good preservation today. My photograph of these houses would indicate that Frederick's home in this block should have made a horrible contrast with the stone mansion where his wife lived before her marriage. His name does not appear in 1816; but in 1817-18 he lived on Nelson Street.

[illegible]

[illegible] the 1790s we have quite a number of [illegible] Frederick and [illegible] and Hamilton. [illegible]

Then he disappears until 1822-24 when he shows up in Sugar Alley. In all of these addresses he is listed as a carpenter.

What was the cause of this rather shabby career on the part of a man who was the son of a very strong character and the father of three exceptional sons? On one occasion, when I had my grandmother reminiscing she remarked, "Old Frederick McComas, he drank up half of Harford County". That could have been true, for we find a number of the members of the family who were close friends with John Barlycorn.

Some years ago I happened to meet an elderly lady out in Cripple Creek, who had lived in Colorado for many years, but who had come from Ohio when she was a girl. She was much interested in the McComas family, and in the first few minutes of our conversation she remarked, "I never yet met a McComas who was not either too religious, or drank too much",

At that time I was a clergyman.

With this rather pathetic treatment of Frederick let us turn to his wife Susannah. Two anecdotes come down the years about that vivacious lady. The first is to the effect that an American soldier slipped into the house, where Susannah was staying, in trying to escape some British soldiers. The enemy was in close pursuit. It was necessary to get quick action. Susannah promptly took over. She slid the soldier behind her wide, pleated skirts, as she stood close to a wall. She told the British to go ahead and search the house. That is

a grand story, if you can believe it. Number two is much more credible. My grandmother used to tell how Susannah in her old age stood before the mirror and soliloquized aloud, "Oh Susannah I can see remnents of beauty still". Whether the remnants of beauty were there, or not, someone else would have to say. Certainly, she had a plenty of beauty as a young woman. From some place, I do not know where, there has come down a photograph of an oil painting made I do not know when. Even this faulty photograph shows a face with a saucy nose, a delicate but firm chin, and an unmistakable evidence of quiet humor in her features.

How came such a charming young lady, the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in the County, to fall in love with an article like Frederick? It would seem that the McComases exercised a curious influence on the Onions. Old Captain William married the mother, Hannah Onion. Nicholas Day McComas married Elizabeth in 1795. Josiah McComas married Charity Onion.

In view of the scanty material that we have about Frederick and Susannah I am going to fill out this chapter with some desultory bits of information about some people who preceded them. Let us look first of all at some of Susannah's ancestors. Her mother's name was Hannah Bond and I chanced upon these entries in the Registry in the Old St. John's Church: "Hannah Bond and Aquila Johns were married January 27th 1757", and on another page "Hannah Bond and Zaccheus Onion were married December 22nd 1757." You explain that one!

What sort of a young lady was this Miss Bond? She certainly came from an old and distinguished family. Peter Bond came into the Colony as early as 1660 and took up land where the City of Baltimore is now located. His son, Thomas, settled in Harford County in 1700 where he acquired a number of plantations. Among her relatives were Dr. Thomas E. Bond and Judge Hugh L. Bond. There is no doubt that she was the wife of Zaccheus Onion whose name as a young man was Zaccheus Barrett. What under the sun could induce him to change it to Zaccheus Onion? Quite an inducement. His Uncle Stephen Onion, who was one of the wealthiest men in the Colony, stipulated in his will that his nephew could share in his estate if he would assume the name of Onion.

This leads us to Stephen Onion. There is no possible way of attaching him directly on our family tree though his nephew gives a direct line of descent. Nevertheless, I find Stephen Onion such a fascinating character I am going to give a little account of what he did. He came over to this Country from Stafford, England, in 1721, and it is about that time that we find him in Cecil County, Maryland. He was at Principio and was the manager of the iron furnace there. How long he remained in that capacity we do not know, probably for some 10 years or more, for we find he owned a tract of land in 1730 which he called "Conhodah", an Indian name, on the West side of the Susquehanna River, not far from Principio. In the same year he took up another tract about two and a half miles from the Susquehanna. This would seem to imply that he had taken

root in, or near, Principio. But his reputation as an "Iron Master" must have spread through the Colony for we find him associated with such persons as Lawrence Washington and Charles Carroll in their undertakings to develop the iron business. Indeed, it is from a series of letters that he wrote to Charles Carroll that we get our best conception of some of the intimate problems of the working of iron furnaces in Colonial times. He was evidently living in Baltimore at this time for we find in St. Paul's records, "Elizabeth Russell Onion daughter of Stephen Onion and his wife Deborah, born July the 12th 1734.

Turning to his letters to Carroll we find one dated February the 7th 1735 at the Baltimore Iron Works. He gives the names of fifty men that he had been employing to cut wood for the furnaces. They had cut 3333 cords. Two weeks later he tells about an accident. The stones of a hearth sank and put a furnace out of commission. He reported that it was badly worn "But am of the Opinion may be Repaired. Probably to make 200 tun of Pigg Iron with small changes". About this time he wrote that he was going to push forward to acquire a large supply of ore. He added that the furnace was making 16 tons a week and that was as good as could be expected. But should the weather continue cold and the water freeze he would have to stop for lack of ore.

The summer offered its own problems. Again he complained that the water was now very low and that hampered his work. Still he must have been doing pretty well for he reported that

he had 108 tons ready to ship. The shipping was not so simple. A "flat" on which he was putting his iron sank at her moorings as she "was very decayed". Just after that his wood cutters left him to go and work for the planters during the harvest. Some of those remaining left later because they could not get axe heads to hew the wood.

That was the sort of life Stephen was living in the year 1735. Apparently the arrangement with Carroll was satisfactory for in this same year Stephen mentions a possible termination of his agreement and speaks of returning to England.

However, in the year 1749 we find him back in the northern part of the Colony where he bought an iron forge and started the company of "Onion and Lawson". About this time some 7 furnaces had been built along the banks of Lower Deer Creek. One furnace he called "Stafford" in memory of his home in England.

Shortly before this venture he bought 300 acres on the Little Gunpowder River from John Belt, which was pleasantly known as "Belt's Prosperity". This purchase is interesting as Zaccheus willed it to his daughters, among them our Susannah. Here stood and still stands a grand old stone house, that we have mentioned before; but which was probably built by Stephen in his later years.

A short distance up the road, past the house, alongside of the River are the ruins of an iron furnace. On an old map this site is referred to as Onion's Iron furnace. It was

probably an enterprise that Stephen undertook in his old age and near his comfortable home.

Iron in Colonial times was in great demand. It was needed for axes, hammers, plows, horseshoes, tires, knives, nails, fishhooks and numerous other necessities. Early in the 18th Century a form of iron was found in the streams that ran down into the Chesapeake Bay. Bacteria, in these waters, resolved the iron and sulphur into an insoluble precipitate that gathered on the rocks. This "bog-ore", or limonite, showed itself on the rough, yellow slabs two or three inches thick. It had to be gathered up, crushed and fed into an iron furnace; where an intense fire was kept by means of a strong draft from bellows. Out of each furnace came a trickle of metal. This flowed out by way of a small channel and dripped into a pool.

This was the sort of enterprise that made Stephen one of the richest men in Maryland. He owned thousands of acres in Harford County in addition to the numerous iron furnaces.

In the "Maryland Gazette" for August 29, 1754 is this notice, "Monday last August 26th died at his house in Baltimore County, Mr. Stephen Onion, owner of the Iron Works on the Gunpowder River, a gentleman of good character and plentiful Fortune".

Stephen belonged to St. John's Church when it was located in the little village of Joppa. There he was buried and a flat stone slab some five feet long and three feet high marked his resting place and that of his little daughter, Elizabeth. Time passed, the little village was abandoned. Only a few houses

remain today. The St. John's, of Colonial times, has completely disappeared. Not a timber of the old Church remains. One stone still stands in what must have been a large burying ground. Stephen's tombstone had a curious history. It disappeared with all the other stones. Some years ago a large flat stone was found at the entrance of what had been an old mill. When it was turned over the old inscription to Stephen and his daughter was hardly legible. It was moved from the field in Joppa to the church yard of the present St. John's in Kingsville. Beside the old building where our ancestors worshipped, this old grey stone, a memorial and then a stepping stone, now stands. Past it, where it stands on a bluff, runs the swift and noisy traffic on the road between Philadelphia and Baltimore.

After that long excursion we must return to Hannah Bond, who married Stephen's nephew in 1757. The result of this marriage was 12 children. Her husband Zaccheus died in 1781. She remained a widow for 4 years and married Captain William McComas in 1785. She died in 1792. In her will we have an interesting view of the sort of things that must have adorned that old Colonial mansion. I shall quote item by item the bequests she made of her personal property to her children. 1. to her daughter Martha she left a silver coffee pot and stand; 2. to Susannah a silver tea pot and stand which at Susannah's death should go to the grandson, Zaccheus; 3. to Hannah a chest of drawers, silver cutterboots (?), a silver cream pot, my mourning ring, a negro girl, a feather bed and a horse with

a side saddle, valued at 20 pounds; 4. to Elizabeth, a chest of drawers, "silver sault sellers and a sugar boal", a gold ring, a mulatta girl, "Mirah", and one horse with side saddle, valued at 20 pounds; 5. to Charity two half pint silver cans, a large silver "soop" spoon, six larger silver tea spoons, one silver tea tongs, one gold ring, one pair silver shoe buckles, one negro woman, "Amy", one negro man "London" (blacksmith) one negro girl "Shartoto", one bed and furniture, and one horse with side saddle, valued at 20 pounds. Also, her "wheeled charrett",-but her wish was that the charrett be sold for money and it was to be put to interest for the benefit of Charity and her children; Item number 6 I must quote in her words "I give to William McComas one negro boy 'George' and one silver punch spoon, - if my said husband will manumitt negroes Samson and his wife Jemy, free; but - if not my negro George is to be sold and the money divided among my daughters." This is a rather unpleasant thing to discover. Hannah could not trust her husband William. She had to hold a whip over him in order to get him to do such a decent thing as freeing two slaves. 7. Stephen was to receive 6 silver table spoons; 8. Thomas the son of Stephen was to receive a negro boy "Joe"; 9. her son Thomas Bond Onion was also to receive 6 silver tea spoons; 10. John Barrett was to have one "sugeraine case of knives and forks" and two corner cupboards; II. to her son Zaccheus Onion, one large "Mahogna Table" and 5 pounds to buy mourning "to him and his heirs forever and no more of my estate whatever"; 12. William Francis

was to have, a desk, book case, a cow and a calf and four sheep; 13. to Corbin she left a clock and a case; 14. "I give unto my trusty negro, Jack the forgeman and Liza his wife their freedom; also, negro Cell and Jem, my waiting man their freedom at my death, to be at their own free will forever".

I have quoted this will in some detail as it gives a very good picture of the wealth and luxury that Hannah and Captain William were enjoying at the time of her death.

To complete the picture, as far as we are able, we should review the will her first husband Zaccheus made in 1781. It, also, gives some idea of the estate that Stephen Onion left to his family.

He left to his wife 200 acres of Onion's Inheritance with his dwelling. A half interest in the lower Mill, all his stock, furniture and a four wheeled carriage. He left to Stephen, born 1766, two tracts of land and five slaves; to Thomas Bond, born 1762, two tracts and four slaves; to John Barrett one half interest in the Lower Mill and part of Onion's Inheritance; to Zaccheus and William all rights and titles to the Upper Mill, a part of Onion's Inheritance and to each three slaves. (He wished the water rights on Onion's Inheritance to be shared equally by both Mills). To Corbin born 1770, two tracts of land and four slaves. To his daughter Martha he left 126 acres of Onion's Pasture, near Joppa; to Susannah 300 acres of Belt's Prosperity (which Stephe had bought in 1745) and one slave; to Hannah 300 acres, to Elizabeth born 1759, a tract of land "Prospect Hills" in the

fork of the Gunpowder, and "my houses and lots in Joppa"; to Sarah 300 acres of "Homer Resurveyed" and one slave; to Charity tracts of land and a negro girl.

He closes his will with a rather broad provision that all of his property which had not been named should be sold and divided among his twelve children.

These two wills supply material for making a picture of the kind of luxury that Susannah must have enjoyed as a girl in that splendid old, stone mansion by the Little Gunpowder River.

The only date we have for Susannah is 1789 when she was married. If we assume that she was about twenty at that time then her birth may have been about 1769. If so she was living through the stirring years of the Revolution when her father was serving in the Army. Her father died in 1781 and her Mother remarried in 1785 so she must have been a witness of the courtship between Captain William and her mother. Then what, did the Captain bring his children to live in the Onion Mansion? Was Frederick among them? Was it there he courted Susannah, whom he married in 1789? One cannot help wondering what the young people thought of the old Captain. In one Land Record we find that he took over some real estate which Susannah had inherited. This was during the time when Frederick and Susannah were selling the property she had inherited.

From all these odds and ends of items you may make up your ideas of Susannah's life in these early years. There

is one thing, I think, we can all agree upon when we look at the photograph of her portrait. Certainly she had a happy disposition and a sense of humor.

THE HERO OF NORTH POINT

Frederick and Susannah named their son "William", after Frederick's father, and "Zacheus", after Susannah's father, and the third son they named "Henry Gough" after a cousin of Susannah, an Englishman of some property. The name Henry Gough McComas came into existence in September 20, 1795, and in the present year 1949 there have been four others of the same name in the family line. Had this third son lived and "brought forth his kind" as did his two older brothers there would have been over 100 more McComases in the world. That is something that is often forgotten when it is said a soldier "gave his life for his country". His brothers lived into their 60s, a good old age for those times, but Henry was killed while still a boy, - in the rather sentimental language on his monument in Baltimore "born September 20th 1795 and killed September 12th 1814, at the battle of North Point, aged 18 years, 11 months and 22 days".

It was the way in which he gave his life for his Country that has claimed admiration for him and his friend Daniel Wells for these many years. Unfortunately, we have very little information about him, or his friend, but what we have will stand out more clearly if we present it against the background of their times.

Keep in mind that Baltimore was a great center for shipping and that not only did ships enter from and leave for all parts of the world but many of these ships were built in the city

and manned by her citizens, that explains why Baltimore was so ready to get into the second war with England. Baltimore ships had been held up on the high seas and native-born Baltimoreans had been impressed into the British Navy. Many parts of the Country were indifferent, or opposed to the War, but not Baltimore. One incident will show the temper of the town.

The "Federal Republican" was published by Wagner and Hanson in Baltimore and two days after War was declared against Great Britain (June 20, 1812) they printed an editorial denouncing the government and claiming that true patriots ought to oppose the War. The paper came out Saturday, and on Monday a mob destroyed the presses and razed the building. However, the editors were urged by many and influential friends to "defend the freedom of the press" and to start publishing again. They printed the paper in Georgetown and undertook to issue it from Wagner's House on Charles Street, which they filled with provisions and arms. About thirty men who believed in free speech joined them, among them was "Light Horse Harry Lee" a famous General of the Revolution, also General James M. Lingan, and a score of well-known men. They got the papers out without trouble on July 27th, but when night came the house was mobbed and General Lee was badly wounded, crippled for life; and General Lingan was killed. But the significant thing was that members of the city government and of the militia witnessed the rioting and did practically nothing to stop it. That could only mean that not only the rabble-rousers and thugs were for war, but also the responsible and intelligent people.

As the two years of War dragged out the people of Baltimore were reduced to rather severe straits. Since her ships could not pass through the British blockade of the Chesapeake, her business activities had pretty well dried up and a number of people left the city to earn a living in the country. So by the time the British fleet was reported coming up the Bay, that famous Sunday morning, September 11th, 1814, the people of the City were ready to fight.

Though the men of those days prepared their City to defend itself they were aware of dangers greater than the burning of the City, the looting of their property and the outrages the British had perpetrated in the little towns and countryside of the Chesapeake. Their Country was menaced. If Baltimore fell the country North and South would be divided and the British would have succeeded in doing just what they failed to do in the Revolution. The situation would have been dangerous, perhaps desperate. For 150 years England had ruled this strip along the Atlantic Coast and for only 29 had it been free. No wonder the London "Times" thought the time had now come for complete "subjugation".

That little engagement on the old North Point road may well have been a significant event in the whole history of our Country.

Possibly, those old-timers were aware of all of the dangers involved for they turned out in force to defend their town.

Rich and poor, distinguished and humble, labored side by side in getting powder, shot, flint for muskets, food, timber, trenching tools; in digging out embankments, shoring up brest works, sinking scows across the harbor as well as drilling and doing their target practice. All of them had the memory of the disgraceful defeat their men had suffered three weeks before, at Bladensburg, when their Capitol had been burned.

Among these thousands were two boys 18 and 19 years of age. They worked on South Street for the Jenkins Brothers. One, Henry Gough McComas worked for Felix Jenkins at 6 South Street, who made saddles, harness and trunks. The other, Daniel Wells worked for Edward Jenkins at 50 South Street, who specialized in saddlery.

Henry's boss, Felix Jenkins, was an old member of the "Mechanical Company". In fact there were four Jenkins brothers in the company. It seems that Felix must have become interested in his apprentice for we find Henry, while only a boy of 18, was elected a member of this distinguished organization.

Some description of this company will give a little background to the life of Henry McComas and, also, some ideas of conditions in those times.

Today, it is known as the "Ancient and Honorable Mechanical Company", but even in the day of Henry it was a somewhat ancient Company. It was started in 1763 by a group of "go-getters". They called it a "mechanical company" to indicate that the members were in the trades and mechanics class and not in a

professional or a political class. As evidences of their type of activity it is noted that they built, the first wharf, the first sea-going vessel, the first flour mill and the first hospital. They really got into politics. They elected the first six mayors of Baltimore. In fact they just about ran the City up until 1776. They discharged nearly all the duties needed for the government of the City, the policing, the selection of magistrates and last but, far from least, the management of the fire department.

The fire department was a vital factor in the little city with so many frame houses and water so inaccessible. Each house was urged to keep two buckets always ready for use in case of fire. These would be indispensible when a bucket brigade was formed to carry buckets from the town pumps or Jones's Falls. The company had a small, copper pump that had been used on a Holland vessel to squirt water on the sails, in order to make them hold the wind. They called it the "Little Dutchman" and used it for 90 years. Spouting engines were pumped by hand and called for a lot of muscle. Brains were needed too, to get these engines to a fire quickly, find a water supply, connect the hose with it and direct that spindling, little column of water on the flames.

Naturally, the Mechanical Company recruited prominent men for their organization. For example, Commodore Joshua Barney became a member as early as 1774 and was still active when Felix Jenkins brought Henry McComas into the organization.

Now, what would lead a boy of 18 to get into that sort of [illegible] political [illegible] the management of the fire department, [illegible]

The fire department [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

a group? Perhaps he was a very serious and very ambitious young man who could enjoy and profit by the company of older and able men. Perhaps. But there is another side to the story. When Henry joined there were five other fire companies in the City, and thereby hangs a tale. Each company felt and let the world know that it was the best fire-fighting crew in the city. This stirred up some serious street fighting. One old member of the company wrote, "The intense partisanship displayed by these separate companies resulted in many disagreeable outbreaks of violence. In some cases amounting to riot".

It seems stupid and rather disgusting to think of a fight raging in a city street, with rocks flying in all directions and here and there a young man getting cut or badly bruised. Yes, it seems stupid and disgusting to me as I sit here in my quiet library, in my 75th year, but it did not seem so to me some 60 years ago. Then the fights that arose between the boys that followed engine number 6 and engine number 7 were far-and-away the most exciting and enjoyable past-times that I knew. To this day there is a scar on my forehead where a devotee of engine number 6 registered with a rock that recochetted.

My personal conviction is that Felix Jenkins, who was in the militia, enjoyed a good scrap and when he found this long, lanky country boy, who was an excellent marksman, Felix reasoned that this muscular youngster could help the good cause of the Mechanical Company in its stoney debates with the "Union" or the "Friendship" companies. I fancy that this was the lure

that led young Henry into such a distinguished organization. Neither of his brothers were members, so there must have been something a little unusual in Henry's case.

In addition to the men in the Mechanical Company Henry must have known all of the 71 young men in his company of the First Maryland Rifles. Then, of course, there was his friend Daniel Wells who worked in the same trade only a few doors from where Henry worked.

Daniel Wells, also, came from an old Maryland family and his home was in Annapolis. There is an old family record which tells that Daniel Wells, son of Mary and Daniel Wells Jr., was born on Wednesday night between one and two o'clock 1794."

The reason why so many of these old records mention the very hour when an infant was born was to make it easy to learn the exact position of stars and planets when an astrologer should be called upon to explain his course in life.

Young Daniel had an elder sister, Susannah, and two younger sisters and two younger brothers. His father had been the captain of an Artillery Company in Annapolis and his grandfather, like Henry's, had served in the Revolution. Probably, both boys had been reared on stories of heroism in the old War, with all the exaggerations and trimmings that veterans use to adorn the past. So a Sharp Shooters Company would be just the thing to appeal to them.

Probably, Henry went to that little brick school house in Franklinville and in that case he probably had English, Elementary Mathematics, History and Land Surveying. Possibly he was like his brother Zacchaeus who was decidedly the thoughtful type

[illegible]

Baltimore [illegible]

something a little [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the First Maryland [illegible]. [illegible], of course, there was [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The [illegible] of [illegible]

very [illegible] when [illegible] the exact position of [illegible] and [illegible] should be [illegible]

[illegible], of an [illegible] Company [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

and certainly the religious type, when he was a boy. We know that he was exceedingly tall and emaciated in his appearance. That build often goes with the "introvert", who gets satisfaction out of life by the thoughts and feelings he entertains rather than by the activities he engages in and the material successes he wins. However, that type is hardly the sort that would join the Mechanical Company and the Sharp Shooters. It would seem probably then that he is a mixture of both "introvert" and "extrovert", which is of course the most frequent type of individual,

As to his religion we have not an iota of information. Zacchaeus was very religious and joined the Methodist Church at an early age. His brother William was a trustee of the "Mountain Church" in Harford.

Before me as I write lies a large photostated copy of a treasured manuscript belonging to the Maryland Historical Society. It is the "Muster Roll of a Company of Riflemen under the Command of Edward Aisquith in the Rifle Battalion of the Maryland Militia, Commanded by Major William Pinkney, now in the service of the U. S. from the 19th day of August 1814 when they first mustered to the 18th day of October 1814". In the muster roll there is one Captain, three Lieutenants, four Sergeants, five Corporals and 58 privates. Henry McComas is number 37 and Daniel Wells is 55. A "Recapitulation" shows that on October the 18th, after two battles there were 55 present 5 absent (sick) 4 in captivity, 2 resigned, 2 discharged and 2 dead. The two dead were of course Wells and McComas.

Note that this Company was mustered on August the 19th and went into battle on August the 24th.

There were two other companies in this battalion, one commanded by a Captain Byers with 70 men, the other by Captain Bader with 60 men. Major Pinkney wrote that he had 120 men available to form two additional companies if he could get the rifles and equipment for them. It was rather late for that on August the 20th; however, that sort of confusion and inaptness did not characterize Pinkney or his riflemen. He had organized his three companies about a year before and they were well organized and officered by this time. As sharp shooters he had planned their uniforms which were in striking contrast to the vivid uniforms of other militia regiments. They wore green jackets and trousers. Over the left shoulder ran the green cord that held the powder horn on the right hip and over the right shoulder ran a cord of the same color holding the bullet pouch to the left side. A fur cap with a plume held in place by a brass eagle-pin served instead of the ornate leather headgear of so many regiments. Last, but far from least, they were armed with old fashioned and very long rifles. That put them in a class by themselves, as we shall see later. Their flag was pictured by a coiled snake and with the motto beneath "Don't tread on me".

Major Pinkney was a distinguished Marylander. He was an outstanding lawyer. He had been a minister to England and was now Att. General of the United States. At the time of these battles he was a man of 50. He put intelligence and ingenuity in the organization of his riflemen and he must have put his

heart in it too for he had his son, William Pinkney Jr., signed up as Adjutant two weeks after his own signature.

The reports of the Generals and the descriptions in histories do not give us the intimate picture of a boy marching to his first battle, at Bladensburg. However, the autobiography of J. P. Kennedy gives a wonderful picture of the experiences of another 18 year old boy as he left Baltimore and marched to his first battle. It is so natural and human and undoubtedly characteristic that I feel it must describe also the sights seen, the fun enjoyed, the dread endured, the excitement, the fatigue, the lust of battle, all the ideas and emotions which could as well have been those of young Henry McComas. "We marched on Sunday, the 21st- our Regiment, the Fifth- accompanied by a battalion of riflemen commanded by William Pinkney, then recently returned from England.****

"It was a day of glorious anticipation, that Sunday morning: when, with all the glitter of a dress parade, we set forth on our march. As we moved through the streets, the pavements were crowded with anxious spectators; the windows were filled with women; friends were rushing to the ranks to bid us good -bye- many exhorting us to be of good cheer and do our duty; handkerchiefs were waving from the fair hands at the windows - some few of the softer sex weeping as they waved adieux to husbands and brothers; the populace were cheering and huzzahing at every corner, as we hurried along in brisk step to familiar music, with banners fluttering in the wind and bayonets flashing in the sun. What a scene it was, and what a

proud actor I was in it! I was in the ecstacy of a vision of glory, stuffed with any quantity of romance. This was a real Army marching to a real War. The enemy, we knew, was in full career, and we had the certainty of meeting him in a few days. Unlike our customary parades our march now had all the equipments of a campaign. Our wagon -train was on the road; our cartridge-boxes were filled; we had our crowd of camp servants and followers. Officers rode backward and forward along the flanks of the column, with a peculiar air of urgent business, as if it required everything to be done in a gallop- the invariable form in which military conceit shows itself in the first movements toward a campaign. The young officers wished to attract attention, and so seemed to be always on the most important messages. As for me- not yet 19- I was too full of the exultation of the time to think of myself- all my fervor was spent in admiration of this glittering Army.

'It were worth 10 years of peaceful life
One glance at their array'

"I thought of these verses, and they spoke of my delight. It was not long before we were outside of the town, in full career on the Washington Road. It was afternoon in warm August weather when we started. By sundown we reached Elkridge Landing, and there turned in upon the flat meadow ground that lies under the hills upon the further bank of the Patapsco, to pitch our tents for the night. Camp-kettles were served out to us and our rations of pork and hard bread. We formed our messes that evening and mine, consisting of six members, who

were consigned to one tent, was made up of pleasant companions. This was all new to us, and very amusing. The Company consisted of gentlemen of good condition and accustomed to luxurious life, and the idea of a supper of fat pork and hard biscuit was a pleasant absurdity which we treated as a matter of laughter. We had our own stores in the wagon to rely upon when we could get at them, and a short, active negro man as a servant for the mess, whom we took into service that evening from the crowd of stragglers who followed the column of march. The first care after getting our tent up was to hold a consultation about our domestic affairs, and it was then resolved that two of us should in turn serve as house-keeper, successively from week to week. The choice today fell upon Ned Scroeder and myself. We were to attend at the giving out of the rations and then cook them. The mess was not likely to grow fat under our administration. Upon repairing to the quartermaster for our supplies, we were given a piece of pork of 5 or 6 pounds, a new camp kettle and a quantity of hard biscuit. Ned and I had a consultation upon the process of cooking, the result of which was that we determined to put our pork in the kettle, to fill this with water to the brim, and then set it over a brisk fire for two hours, so we set about it."

Kennedy then gives a description of building a wonderful fire and perching the kettle on stones in its midst. Then they went off to watch a parade. In less than an hour they came back and found a little mound of hot coals, their water all boiled out and the iron red hot. In the bottom of the kettle

they found some charred bones something that looked like black soap and flakes from the kettle. "Lige", their servant was called and he foraged around and managed to get a pretty good supper.

"The night was chilly, and I had come away without a blanket, trusting to a great coat which I thought would be sufficient for a Summer campaign. Luckily, my father came along by our quarters, and perceiving my condition, went out and supplied my need by a contribution from a friend in the neighborhood. At the regulation hour, the members of the mess who were not detailed for guard duty- some four or five of us- crept into our tent, and arranging our blankets into a soft bed, laid down and fell into a hearty sleep which was only broken by the reveille the next morning. This was my first night of a regular campaign. The next day we marched from the Landing to Vansville, about 20 miles- halting an hour or so at Waterloo, then to McCoy's Tavern, where we got our dinner, I mean my comrades and myself, having no need and not very willing to try another experiment in cooking for ourselves. The road was hot and portions of it in deep sand. It was a great trial. We were in Winter cloth uniforms, with a most absurd helmet of thick jacked leather and covered with plumes. We carried, besides a knapsack, in which- in my own case- I had packed a great coat, my newly acquired blanket, two or three shirts, stockings, etc. Among these articles I had also put a pair of pumps, which I had provided with the idea, that, after we had beaten the British Army and saved

Washington, Mr. Madison would very likely invite us to a ball at the White House, and I wanted to be ready for it. The knapsacks must have weighed at least 10 pounds. Then there was a Harper's Ferry musket of 14 pounds. Take our burden altogether, and we could not have been tramping over those sandy roads under the broiling sun of August, with less than 30 pounds of weight upon us. But we bore it splendidly, toiling and sweating in a dense cloud of dust, drinking the muddy water of the little brooks which our passage over them disturbed, and taking all the discomforts of this rough experience with a cheerful heart and a stout resolve. We joked with our afflictions, laughed at each other, and sang in the worst of time. The United Volunteers was the finest company in the regiment, about 100 strong when in full array, but now counting 80 effective men. These were elite of the city- several of them gentlemen of large fortunes. William Gilmore was one of them- a merchant of high standing; Meredith, who had so long been the most distinguished at the bar, was another. It was what is called the crack company of the city, and composed of a class of men who were not generally supposed to be the best to endure fatigue, and yet there was no body of men in all the troups of Baltimore who were more ready for all service, more persistent in meeting and accomplishing the severest duty. To me personally labor and fatigue were nothing. I was inured to both by self-discipline, and I had come to a philosophic con-

viction that both were essential to all enjoyments of life, and beside this bit of philosophy, I was lured by the romance of our enterprise into an oblivion of its hardships.

"The second day brought us to Vansville, by the way, a town consisting of one house, on the top of a hill, where stage-passengers stopped for a change of horses on the road to Washington: and at early dawn the next day- Tuesday morning, the 22nd of August- we resumed the road, and reached Bladensburg about five in the afternoon, having marched very slowly, with many halts during the day, waiting for orders from the commander-in-chief. Reports were coming to us every moment of the movements of the enemy. They had passed Marlborough, and were marching on Washington but whether they were on the direct road to the City, or were coming by way of Bladensburg, was uncertain. Our movements depended somewhat upon them. General Winder, who commanded the Army immediately in front of the enemy, and was retiring slowly before him, was advised of our march, and was sending frequent instructions to our commander, of course, we in the ranks knew nothing about these high matters. All that we could hear were the flying rumors of the hour, which were stirring enough.....

"We had a pleasant evening in camp near Bladensburg. Our tents were pitched onthe slope of a hill above the town on the Eastern side of the river. Stansbury's Brigade of drafted militia were there, and Winder with the rest of the Army, which altogether perhaps counted 9000 men, was not far off. He was

falling back before the march of the enemy who could not have been more than 10 or 12 miles off.

"The afternoon towards sunset was mild and pleasant and we had leisure to refresh ourselves by a bath in the Eastern Branch. Our Camp was supplied with every comfort.... My feet were swollen and sore from my day's march in boots, such as none but a green soldier would ever have put on; so for my comfort, I had taken them off, and substituted my neat pair of pumps from the pocket of my knapsack, and in this easy enjoyment of rest and good fellowship, we smoked our cigars and talked about the battle of tomorrow until the hour when the order of the camp obliged us to extinguish our lights and turn in.

"I was too much excited by the novelty and attraction of my position and by the talk of my comrades in the tent, to get asleep before midnight. About an hour after this- one o'clock- we were aroused by the scattered shots of our pickets, some four or five in rapid succession, in the direction of the Marlborough Road, and by the rapid beating of the long roll from every drum in the camp. Everyone believed that the enemy was upon us, and there was consequently an immense bustle in getting ready to meet him. We struck a light to be able to find our coats, accoutrements, and so forth, but in a moment it was stolen away by some neighbor who came to borrow it only for a moment to light his own candle and in the confusion forgot to return it. This gave rise to some ludicrous distresses. Some got the wrong boots, others a coat that didn't fit, some could not find their cross-belts. There was no time allowed

to rectify these mistakes. I, luckily, was all right, except that I sallied out in my pumps. We were formed in line and marched off towards the front, perhaps a mile and when we came to a halt, we were soon ordered to march back again to camp.

"What was the cause of this sudden excursion and quick abandonment of it I never learned. But it was evident there was a false alarm. On our return march our attention was called to the sudden reddening of the sky in the direction of the lower bridge of the Eastern Branch, by which the River Road from Marlborough crossed to Washington. The sky became more lurid every moment, and at last we could discern the flames. A dispatch which reached us when we got back to camp, and had just laid down to sleep, brought us information that Winder had crossed the bridge and then burnt it to impede the march of the enemy who was forced to direct his march upon the Bladensburg Road. Winder himself was en route to join us, and we were ordered forthwith to break up our camp and march toward Washington. Here was new excitement- everythin was gathered up in a few moments. All our baggage was tossed into our regimental wagons- knapsacks, provisions, blankets, everything but our arms. Among them went my boots. The tents were struck and packed away with the speed of the shifting of a scene upon the stage, and in half an hour from the time of receiving the order we were in full column of march upon the road. Descending into the village we crossed the bridge and moved toward Washington: but after making about two miles at a very

slow pace we found ourselves brought to a halt, and after this we loitered as slow as foot could fall along the road, manifestl expecting some order that should turn us back towards the village we had left. What a march that was! I never was so sleepy in my life. We had been too much exhilarated in the early part of the night to feel the fatigue of our day's march, but now that fatigue returned upon me with double force. I slept as I walked. At every halt of a moment whole platoons laid down in the dusty road and slept till the officers gave the word to move on. How very weary I felt! The burning of the bridge lighted up the whole Southern sky but it had no power to attract our gaze. At length when we had reached a hill some three miles on our route, we were marche into a stubble field and told that we might rest until daylight. Here we threw ourselves upon the ground without any covering, exposed to the heavy dew which moistened the earth, and slept. Mine was the sleep of Endymion. When I awoke I was lying on my back with the hot sun of a Summer morning beaming on my face. Our orders then were to march back to Bladensburg. Soon we had the famous 'trial of souls'- the battle of Bladensburg. The drafted militia ran away at the first fire, and the Fifth Regiment was driven off the field with the bayonet. We made a fine scamper of it."

With that Kennedy ended his account. Evidently he did not care to describe the disappointing conduct of the troops.

This description by young Kennedy of the march to Washington might well be a description of the march that Henry McComas made at the same time. However, what happened on the battlefield gives two different stories for the riflemen and for the "Dandy Fifth of Baltimore".

To get some idea of what a young man went through on that broiling hot day in August we must follow the movements of the troops before the battle and during the fighting. We cannot follow them after the battle for only Heaven knows what became of them. First, let us get some idea of that field of battle. Picture to yourself a large capital "T". The cross line at the top running from right to left, represents the Georgetown Road running East and West. The stem of the "T" represents the Washington Road running roughly North and South. Alongside of the Georgetown Road ran a stream, the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River. On the Washington Road there was a bridge over this stream. That bridge was the most important thing in the world to those American troops. The British had to cross this bridge to get to Washington. Consequently every gun in the American Army was trained on that bridge.

The Washington Road rises in a gentle hill from the bridge and on this road Commodore Barney had a battery of 18 pounders, in a position to fire on the British as soon as they should attempt to cross the stream. Another battery composed of six guns and firing 6 pound balls was posted much nearer to the bridge. On the "T" it would be just a little to the left of the intersecting lines. It was in front of an old barn and its left

flank rested on a little stream which flowed into the Eastern Branch. Its right flank was protected by Major Pinkney's Riflemen, who were deployed as far as the Washington Road. Just behind the Riflemen was young Kennedy's famous Fifth Regiment.

Now, obviously, the first thing that the British would hit just had to be this advanced post with its 6 guns and 3 companies of Sharp Shooters. Certainly, it must have been obvious to every man in that position that he and his mates would have to bear the impact of the first attack by Wellington's veterans.

From sun-up to twelve thirty noon these young men waited for the British to appear. One diversion helped to break the monotony. A thin cloud of dust could be seen rising from the road running down from the North into the town of Bladensburg. Major Pinkney and his men hurried down through the stubble and the brush, beside the stream, as far as the Washington Road, to get a first shot at the enemy. It was no enemy. It was a regiment of odds and ends of militia from Anne Arundel County, dog-tired from a 16 mile march. So the Riflemen filtered back to their original position.

Shortly after this two things happened that really were important. Columns of dust could be seen floating in the air well off to the East on the Georgetown Road, and this time there could be no doubt that the British Regulars were kicking up that signal. Then General Winder gave an order for the Fifth Regiment to pull out of the orchard where they were supporting the Artillery and Riflemen and to take a position on the hill a quarter of a mile to the rear. This stupid order went far

toward losing the entire engagement. Later, Major Pinkney blurted out "The Fifth Regiment, had now to the great disparagement of my Companies and the Artillery, been made to retire to a hill several hundred yards in our rear, but visable nevertheless to the enemy, where it could do little more than display its gallantry."

After this maneuver had been executed and a few minutes before the battle actually began, General Winder sent an order to Major Pinkney "to take the most judicious position with his Riflemen to protect the Artillery at the battery" and then added that Pinkney should remove part of his command around to the left of the battery. So the Major took Captain Aisquith's Company out of his line and sent it off to the left of the guns. This put Henry McComas and his mates between the little stream that flowed into the Eastern Branch and the Branch itself. A mill stood just behind them. It was a good position for firing on the bridge. It also commanded a good view of some of the houses in Bladensburg that faced on the Georgetown Road.

As the British appeared coming up the Georgetown Road from the East the little 6 pounders fired into the mass of red uniforms and when the smoke cleared away Henry could see three figures lying in the road. One was still and two were still writhing in agony. That was his first taste of battle. After that blast the British took cover and it was hard to select one of them for a long rifle shot. Then from a warehouse in Bladensburg facing the Georgetown Road there was a terrific burst of flame flashing out one of the windows. Out of the flame came a "Congreve" rocket, arching over toward the 6 guns,

but twisting and turning as it went. The Congreve rocket was an iron rod some ten feet in length, where it struck a young tree it ripped it in two, where it hit a man it mangled him. The guns and the Riflemen concentrated on the warehouse and stopped this horrible menace for a time. As history has it, Henry's hat plume was cut off by a rocket in this battle, so it might well have been this first fierce blast of the rockets snapped those feathers off, for he was just across the road from those warehouses.

Congreve rockets in that day were the "new weapon" and meant to the soldier that faced them what poison gas, flame throwers, the flaming onion and the bazooka meant in the last wars. Weapons for exciting terror and panic, they could not fail to put the fear of God in those raw militia men, that saw them coming but could not dodge them.

Shortly, the British forced the bridge, swarmed over the field leading to the orchard. Some eleven hundred trained regulars assailed about five hundred raw militia in that assault and the result was just what anyone could expect. The battery limbered up and departed. Major Pinkney fell back and formed his Riflemen on the left flank of the Fifth regiment, which still remained where Winder posted it. But what had become of Aisquith's Company that had taken its position well to the left of the battery and across the mill stream? That's what Major Pinkney wondered. So when the Fifth started its advance against the enemy he sent his adjutant, Will Pinkney Jr., who had commandeered a horse, somehow, to gallop down to the mill and reconnoiter. There was not sign of Aisquith's company. Young

Pinkney galloped back through a galling fire and received a bullet in his arm that broke the bone above his elbow. Dismounting behind the lines he reported that there was no support to be had from the left flank. Nevertheless, the Riflemen and the Fifth charged the British and might have won the day had not Winder ordered a retreat that broke into a route, and the route became a panic which swept away the whole left flank of the American Army.

What did happen to the Aisquith Sharp Shooters? I cannot find out. Their Muster Roll shows that none of them were killed at Bladensburg. Probably they headed west on the Georgetown road and fell in with some infantry that had been posted well behind them. From there on Henry had to fend for himself. Maybe he got back into the fight, but that seems improbable as the fight did not last very long.

Winder dropped back into Washington with the remnants of various regiments, hoping to gather a sufficient force to make another fight, but not enough men put in an appearance for any sort of a resistance. He then continued his retreat on back to Georgetown and through that little town on to Tenleytown, two miles beyond. A few sentences from General Winder's report give a picture of what was happening. "Here was evinced one of the great defects of all undisciplined and unorganized troops; no efforts could rouse officers and men to the exertion necessary to place themselves in such a state of comfort and security as is attainable even under very disadvantageous circumstances. Such of them as could be halted, instead of making those efforts, gave themselves up to the

uncontrolled feelings which fatigue, privation and exhaustion produced, and many hundreds, in spite of all precautions and efforts, passed on and pursued their way, either toward home, or in search of refreshments and quarters."

To give a dramatic setting for this mad confusion and wild retreat, the sky lighted up with a great crimson canopy or reflected light from the red flames of the burning Capitol. Following up this dramatic effect came another, a terrific thunder storm. An English officer described it. "The effect was magnificant beyond the power of language to describe. Flash after flash of vivid lightening displayed not only the bivouac, but the streets, the houses, nay the very windows of the town, with a degree of minuteness greater than the beams of the noonday sun would have produced."

In all this welter of confusion among men and disorder in Nature was the young sharp shooter. Whether his long legs took him to "refreshments and quarters" or struck out on the long road "toward home" his brother William must have learned. Apparently, he never gave the secret away for no family tradition has filtered down the years, describing the retreat from the field of battle or the wandering in the night that followed.

As the news sifted back to Baltimore the little city was at once both alarmed and resolute. One soldier had ran from the battle, hid in a swamp and spent two days walking back to Baltimore. He frankly informed one and all that the British were far and away too strong and that Baltimore's only hope was to surrender before it should share the fate of Washington. Such a counsel of despair must have come from hundreds of men who

were terror-struck by the battle and disillusioned in their long tramp back home. They just had to have a better reason for running off the field than nervousness. Consequently, that British Army swelled to pretty ominous dimensions. However, the dire predictions did not throw Baltimore off her stride. On the day of the battle the citizens from each ward formed Vigilance and Safety Committees and on the 25th a group of the leading men formed a committee to induce General Samuel Smith to take full charge of the defense of the City. General Smith was one of the brainiest and toughest citizens the city ever produced. When he took hold things began to hum. No one knew whether the attack would come in a few days or a few weeks, but everyone knew the time would be short.

How did Henry put in his time awaiting the next battle? Drilling and target practice would account for some of the time. Was there a girl to be seen? Probably; no, certainly! Why did he wait till nine o'clock at night before marching off to North Point when his company left at three in the afternoon? Only a girl can explain that sort of thing. Surely, he must have gone up to Harford County to see his mother and father, and he might have gone on up to see old Captain William in Abingdon. He had a plenty of relatives in Harford County to keep him busy if he wanted that sort of diversion. What he said to them and what they said to him would make interesting reading. One remark he made to his mother, and that has come down the family tradition, may date from that period. It seems that he told her to get out his best clothes and have them ready as he would like to look nice after he was shot. That young man had an eerie sense of humor.

were [illegible] in the long run [illegible] than [illegible]. That [illegible] had to make a better showing than [illegible] the [illegible] than reinforcements. Consequently, that Griffin [illegible], however, [illegible] on the [illegible] of the [illegible] from [illegible] Highlanders and [illegible] the [illegible] formed a committee in [illegible] Samuel Smith to take full charge of the defense of the City. General Smith was one of the brightest and [illegible] with [illegible]. With the [illegible]. In one way [illegible] the [illegible] would [illegible], but [illegible] the [illegible] would be [illegible].

Now old Henry put in his time [illegible] Griffing and [illegible] would [illegible] the [illegible] of the time. [illegible] Secretly, he must have gone up to [illegible] his [illegible] Captain Griffin in [illegible]. [illegible] diversion. [illegible]

On Sunday morning, September 11th, 1814, all Baltimore went to the Churches' morning services. During the worship three cannon shots warned everyone that the British fleet had been sighted coming up the Bay. At once the various regiments started for their appointed positions, the Riflemen marching again with the "Dandy Fifth". They were accompanied with four other regiments and some cavalry and they went out the old Philadelphia road to the North Point road some seven miles from Baltimore before they camped for the night. However, the Riflemen proceeded two miles further down the road toward North Point before they went into camp. Captain Bader had been captured at Bladensburg and Lieutenant Andres took his command, but Aisquith and Byers were both with their companies.

Henry was not with them when they made camp and did not reach camp until midnight. He said he was delayed by circumstances uncontrollable by him. Possibly there were "goodbyes" to be made that kept him. Quite probably they were made in William's little house on High Street and it may well be that this was the occasion when he remarked "Well, here goes for a wooden leg or a golden epaulette". But that jocose spirit did not accompany him on the long walk with his heavy rifle out the Philadelphia pike, for he assured a newly made friend that he was tormented with the idea that had occurred to him before he left home that he was to die in the battle. However, between midnight and dawn, when the Reveille routed them all out to get breakfast and go to their battle positions, he had a chance to catch a little sleep.

From a newspaper clipping containing a letter from another soldier in his company we get a first hand impression of young Henry just before the battle. William pasted this clipping in his Bible in 1851. It may have been written by John H. W. Hawkins who was in Aisquith's company and whose biography states that he saw Wells and McComas killed and the British General fall (but the muster roll has Hawkin's first name as James). Hawkins saw Henry as "tall, slender of emaciated form" but polite and sociable. He readily entered into the hilarity and horse-play that is natural to boys of his age. By the way, Hawkins was only 17 and the apprentice of a hat-maker. An officer in the First World War once told me that he could gauge the morale of any group of soldiers by the amount of "kidding" they engaged in, and when they became quiet and thoughtful their morale slumped. Evidently Henry and his group were full of morale until they happened to see Dr. Martin get off of his horse, on the other side of the road, and start to making bandages to bind up the wounds he knew were coming.

Dr. Samuel Martin was the surgeon for the Riflemen and was quite a character. He was in the battle of Bladensburg and stayed in it after the Riflemen had left. British soldiers captured him up the road with Commodore Barney, who kept fighting till the last, and only quit when he was so badly wounded he could no longer stand. General Ross ordered Martin's immediate release on learning that he was a surgeon. Evidently this so impressed the surgeon that he insisted all his life that "General Ross was a perfect gentleman, a perfect Christian

gentleman." That release explains why the surgeon was back with his men 18 days after his capture. He rode up to the very front of the battle and was so close to Wells and McComas that he saw them shoot and saw the General fall from his horse. He was so close to the action that he picked up Sergeant McKensie, who was wounded by the volley that killed Wells and McComas. It must have been the surgeon who heard McComas call to Wells "I see a mark" and Wells reply "So do I"; just as General Ross showed up on his white horse.

So it was this young surgeon leaning against his horse and tearing some muslin into uniform widths for binding wounds that caught the attention of the Riflemen. All of them had seen their friends wounded and killed less than three weeks ago and all had seen how an iron rocket could mangle a man. Things that were funny before the doctor pulled that muslin out of his saddle bags did not seem funny any more. At this juncture young McComas remarked to younger Hawkins that if there were an engagement he was confident that he was going to be killed. To which Hawkins replied that if that was such a sure thing why didn't he stay in Baltimore, he was six hours late getting to the field anyway. The other boy answered he would rather get what was coming to him than to be absent from his company during a battle.

About this time the Videttes began riding back from their reconnoitres down the road. They could report that the entire British force had disembarked by seven o'clock and had started up the North Point road. An advanced guard had set fire to

the Todd house, an English ensign had attacked Elenor Shaw in her home and she had been hurt in jumping out a window, the Navy Blue Jackets had gotten out of hand and were leaving the ranks to chase pigs and chickens. Nevertheless, the column was steadily coming up the road.

Such waiting was undoubtedly irksome to General Stricker so he decided to annoy the enemy. Captain Byers was now in command of the Riflemen. The General ordered him to take his men down the road and do as much damage as he could. That enterprise turned out badly. Byers soon returned without contacting the enemy but with a story that he had heard to the effect that the enemy had slipped behind him and he was about to be cut off from the main force. Thoroughly disgusted, General Stricker ordered him to post his men well off on the right flank. And that put the Riflemen along side of the famous Fifth.

Then came a story that really touched the General painfully. I quote from his report to General Samuel Smith.

"My Viddettes soon brought information that the enemy in small force was enjoying himself at Gorsuch farm insulted at the idea of a small marauding party this daring provoking chastisement, several of my officers volunteered their corps to dislodge it. Captain Levering's and Howard's companies from the Fifth, about 150 in number, under Major Heath of that Regiment; Captain Aisquith's and a few other riflemen, in all about 70; one 4-pounder with ten men under Lieutenant Stiles and the cavalry, were immediately pushed forward to punish the

insolence of the enemy's advance; or, if his main body appeared to give evidence of my wish for a general engagement. The latter purpose was soon answered; this small volunteer corps had proceeded scarcely half a mile before the main body of the enemy showed itself which was immediately attacked. The infantry and riflemen maintained a fire of some minutes, and returned with some loss in killed and wounded; the cavalry and artillery, owing to the disadvantageous ground was not able to support them",

The small force of the enemy at Gorsuch's Farm probably included General Ross. It may be that at that time the incident which has so often been quoted occurred. After Mr. Gorsuch had served the General his morning meal he evidently was in some doubt concerning the General's next meal. So he asked what would the general like for a dinner. Then the General gave the oft-quoted reply "I shall eat dinner in Baltimore or in Hell."

It was this maneuver that placed Wells and McComas well ahead of the rest of the Army and left them there. When Heath fell back with his men a number of the Riflemen held to their advanced positions.

Now, let us switch to the English side of the picture and see some events as they saw them. These items are taken from a book "The Experiences of An English Sergeant in the King's Service" by William Sannford, London, 1817. Sannford was the chief of Couriers at the headquarters of General Ross. His

book tells of General Ross talking with a prisoner when the British column came to a halt in a skirmish with the Americans.

He stated that General Ross accompanied by Colonel McNamara and Lieutenant Hamilton and two couriers (Sergeant Sannford being one of them) rode forward to ascertain the situation. 400 yards in their front were discovered three men, one of whom was in a tree. The others had guns and canteens, having the appearance of a detail sent for water. It was explained afterwards that the man in the tree was gathering peaches. By the aid of a glass it was ascertained that the men belonged to separate organizations, one of them being an artilleryman. As soon as the British were discovered, the man jumped down from the tree, and all three fired simultaneously. Ross fell into McNamara's arms and Hamilton, though prostrated to the ground was up immediately. McNamara's coat was shot through in three places, and it was found on examination that the guns were loaded with buck-shot and ball cartridges. One of the horses received no less than 5 buck-shot in his breast. One of the Americans had on a high hat, such as is sworn by citizens, and known in London as a castor hat. The skirmish line of the British fired and killed the three men beneath the tree where they were first discovered.

Giving the sergeant all the credit for trying to tell the truth, it would hardly seem that the Sharp Shooters were 400 yards away from the General; for that would be a remarkable shot even with a modern rifle. However, we know that a good cool trick of keeping their [illegible] a prisoner when the British soldier came up [illegible] with the [illegible].

He [illegible] that Sergeant [illegible] [illegible] Robinson and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Sanford being one of them. [illegible], very [illegible]. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] one of whom was [illegible]. [illegible] had [illegible], having the appearance of a [illegible] [illegible]. It was explained afterwards that [illegible] possible. By the aid of a [illegible] [illegible] the men [illegible] of separate [illegible], one of them being an artilleryman. He [illegible] [illegible], and the [illegible] [illegible] the first, [illegible] horse fell [illegible] [illegible] on the ground [illegible]. [illegible] was shot through the [illegible] [illegible] that the [illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible]. One of the [illegible] [illegible] in the actually [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] back. The [illegible] of the [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] they [illegible].

[illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible], [illegible] 100 yards away from [illegible] [illegible]. However, he [illegible] that a [illegible] rifle in those days was capable of some fine shooting. Back in 1775 the "Virginia Gazette" tells of two boys who put 8 bullets through a bull's eye the size of a silver dollar at a distance of 68 yards. Washington wanted to show the New Englanders how some of the men from the South could shoot. This was when he was besieging Boston. He erected a pole seven inches in diameter (about the side-width of a man's body) and stationed his men 200 yards away. They cut the pole in two with their shots. So it seems possible that these young Riflemen could have delivered those fatal shots for we know that Major Pinkney had armed his men with rifles having unusually long barrels and so capable of carrying an exceptionally long distance. Then too, these boys were located where they could take a careful aim by resting their rifles on the boughs of trees. Then too, they were very fortunate for the General must have remained very still while he surveyed the field with his glasses.

Another British account puts it as follows: "Our skirmish today was for a while tolerably hot and extremely animated... Our loss again was very trifling. Two men killed and about a dozen wounded had made up the sum of our casualties and it may be with truth asserted, that everything was going on as the General himself could have wished. But unhappily he was not satisfied with this. The firing struck him as much more heavy and continued than it ought to be; he was apprehensive that we had fallen into some serious ambuscade,

and unwilling to trifle with the safety of a few companies, he rode forward for the purpose of satisfying himself that they were safe. How bitterly had the whole expedition cause to lament that step. He had scarcely entered the wood, when an American Rifleman singled him out; he fired, and the ball true to its mark pierced his side. When the General received his death wound, I chanced to be standing at no great distance from him. I saw that he was struck, for the reins dropped instantly from his hands and he leaned forward upon the pummel of his saddle." (See "British Invasion of Md.", W. M. Marine)

Now let us return to the boys that had delivered this telling blow on the British Army. The fighting around them was of a desultory nature; here a shot, there a shot, from different parts of the woods, as the English advance parties happened to encounter the Riflemen. The day was very hot and rumor has it that the boys had stationed themselves near a spring. Another rumor puts a peach tree in the picture and a third man up the tree picking peaches. It would seem that the underbrush was not very thick where they were waiting, for two eye witnesses reported seeing them fall. Certainly, they must have been on the alert for shots were coming from every direction. It is interesting to note that both boys picked their mark, the General on the white horse. Hardly had their shots rung out and the smoke from their rifles indicated their positions when a fusilade from the English dropped the two boys where they stood. They were only a few paces apart.

Wells fell with a bullet through the back of his head; McComas fell in the act of reloading his rifle with a bullet through his heart.

From Glieg's diary we read that the British camped near the battlefield on the night of September the 12th and were made wretched by a heavy down-pour of rain. In the rain they followed Stricker's Army back to Baltimore on the 13th. There they encountered such formidable defenses that they decided not to make an attack, but to wait until night and then to retreat back to their ships. They departed at about three o'clock that night in a pouring rain, but before day broke the sky had cleared and the moon lighted up the road. "When day broke, our piquets, which had withdrawn about an hour before, rejoined us, and we went on in a body. Marching over the battle field of the 12th we beheld the dead scattered about and still unburied; but so far different from those which we had seen at Bladensburg, that they had not been stripped, every man lying as he had fallen."

It must have been after mid-day when Henri Dukehart, a private in Aisquith's company, found the bodies of Wells and McComas and carried them off of the field of battle. For two days and nights their bodies had lain out in the open, during the greater part of the time in a drenching rain.

Henry's brother William used to tell members of his family that he would never forget the terrible walk from the North Point road to Baltimore behind a two wheeled cart

that carried his brother. The cart was so short and the young soldier so tall that his legs hung over the end of the cart and swung with its movements. Surely that must have been a gruesome sight, - that soiled and bloody and wet green uniform and those long legs doing a sort of macaber death dance.

Some 44 years after the battle a gentleman in Harrisburg wrote a letter to a Baltimorean telling how he, when a boy of nine, had seen the burial of the two Sharp Shooters. The men of Aisquith's company came trooping down the Philadelphia road and turned up what is now Broadway. They proceeded to the cemetery of Christ's Church, where the Hopkins Hospital now stands. There the bodies were lowered into the ground. What he especially recalled was the post and rail fence that ran around the grave yard and the flock of boys that sat perched on the rail. These youngsters had been down to the battlefield and had gathered up a great assortment of souvenirs. Evidently, it was not an occasion that attracted much attention. At that time it was not generally known that these boys had killed the British General. The witnesses of the event had not had time to make their reports.

In sharp contrast with this humble burial was the pomp and pageantry of the reinterment of "the heroes of North Point" on the anniversary of the battle, in 1858. The "Sun" of that date had over six columns describing the "Grand Military and Civic Procession." The bodies of the two soldiers had lain in state at the Maryland Institute under military guard

and later were placed upon a "Catafalque, drawn by four white horses each led by a groom. The coffins were decorated with wreathes and bouquets of fresh flowers, with a sword laid across them. On each side was a squad of "Wells and McComas Rifles." Among the pallbearers was Henri Dukehart, who had taken the bodies from the field of battle four decades before this gala event. Following the catafalque came carriages bearing the "Old Defenders", veterans of the battles at Fort McHenry and North Point and following these were the carriages carrying the members of the Wells and McComas families. Following these carriages were all the regiments of the City. This long parade wound its way out to Ashland Square, where Monument, Gay and Aisquith Streets intersect. There, a great crowd was waiting with flags and bunting everywhere. On a raised platform the Governor, Mayor and other officials were seated. The orator of the occasion was the Hon. John C. Legrand and his oration included just about everything connected with the past, the present, and the wonderful future of Baltimore. There are about three sentences in this long speech concerning the two soldiers who were having a monument raised over their bodies. One of these sentences ran "We are told that in the social relations of life they were all that could be desired". That sort of fulsome laudation was not calculated to make those two boys jump out of their caskets and cheer.

What was the matter with this speaker who was selected to make his eulogy for the two soldiers and not for the whole

City of Baltimore? The answer is simple. Politics. For over 40 years an argument had raged about who killed General Ross. In a history of the War that came out in 1817, Brakenridge claimed that he was killed by a volley from the Mechanical Volunteers. He wrote: "A military expert reached that conclusion after locating the positions of various companies on the field". Another argument was to the effect that General Ross was killed by a musket ball and buck shot, and the Independent Blues, a company in the famous Fifth Regiment had their guns loaded in that way. Moreover, Captain Levering of the Company had told one of his men to shoot at a British officer at the head of the British line. The Captain saw the officer fall and from the description of his uniform thought it must have been Ross.

Now, it would not show good political sense to take sides in this disagreement. On the one side were members of two of the most popular and famous organizations in Maryland, on the other wise were two humble lads, apprentices from shops on South street, and the men who had declared that they had seen the boys aim, shoot and the general fall from his horse.

A. L. Sioussat in her book "Old Baltimore" makes this statement: "It is curious how impressions vanish, and people of a later day insist that it is impossible for things to have happened of which there were eye witnesses. Thus for years there was no question of the fact that General Ross had been shot by two lads, Wells and McComas; but afterwards witnesses were adduced to assure us that this was a great

error. It may be well to say here that Dr. Samuel Martin, of whom we have already made mention, had been assigned to a battalion of these Riflemen, and he averred all his life that he had seen the encounter which laid General Ross low... As a little girl, as late as 1870 the writer has heard Dr. Martin tell the story again and again. He lived to be over 90 years of age, and his stories of his adventures were very interesting, as he was one of the typical men of the day."

Even had the Hon. Legrand been uncertain whose bullet did the job he could at least have told his hearers something about the two young soldiers. He could have told them that it had been possible to determine which of the old coffins held which bodies. That of McComas had an extension nailed on it to accommodate those extraordinary long legs. From that he could have gone on to say that, though there was this difference in the height of the two boys, there was a sameness in the depth of the affection they had for each other, etc., etc.

If Legrand did not deserve any compliments for what he did beside the monument of Wells and McComas certainly the English did not deserve any compliments for the inscription they put on the monument of General Ross in Halifax "Here on the 29th of September 1814, was committed to the earth, the body of Major General Ross, who after having distinguished himself in all ranks as an officer in Egypt, Italy, Portugal, France and America, was killed at the commencement of an action which terminated in the defeat and rout of the troops of the

United States, near Baltimore, on the 12th of September 1814."

The committee who drew up that inscription did not get their facts quite straight. One cannot help wondering if they happened to know this fact. After the body of the General was taken aboard ship, they found they had no embalming fluid, so they put him in a large barrel of rum. This the Blue Jackets quickly discovered and with a gimlet and some straws they eventually robbed the General of his environment.

It is very interesting to read the newspaper accounts of the battle of Baltimore as they have appeared in the last 135 years, when the anniversaries are celebrated. At first there was hardly any mention of the event. This happened in the anniversaries five, ten and fifteen years after the battle. Along in the 1830s they began to have parades and speeches. This seems to have grown in popularity while the Old Defenders were still living.

Seemingly it takes a lapse of time for us to appreciate the heroism of our young men. Today one hears little of what the Tenth Squadron did in the Pacific during our last War. In a few years those boys will become immortalized.

ZACCHEUS ONION McCOMAS

Though Zaccheus McComas is not a direct ancestor on our branch of the family tree he is, to me, such an interesting character that I am going to digress and give a little sketch of his life. Unlike the other sketches, our materials for this one consist in the things that he thought and felt rather than his business activities and an inventory of his estate.

Zaccheus was a younger brother of William and two years older than Henry. In the battle of Baltimore he was in the first Maryland Regiment and not in the 40th or 42nd which were recruited from Harford County and had a number of his cousins in them.

In 1815 according to "the Historical and Biographical Records of Washington County" he went up to Hagerstown. There he married Susan Fechtig in 1816 and, also, entered the Methodist ministry. In the same year he returned to Baltimore and was pastor of the Utah Methodist Episcopal church until 1821. Then he went to the Williamsport M. E. church "for a time". We have some description of Williamsport in 1828. It had about 100 houses and 900 people, three churches, four taverns and five stores. There is something wrong with these "Records of Washington County". I have recently checked carefully with a Methodist clergyman, who is an historian for the Methodist church in this Country. We went back to original documents from the year 1810 to 1830. These old documents gave the names, dates and churches for Methodist

ministers of that period. Zaccheus' name was no where to be found. Said the historian, he could not possibly have been a minister in a Methodist church from 1816 to 1821. Methodist ministers were shifted from one charge to another once every year. The idea was that these ministers had all had a spectacular conversion when they joined the Army of The Lord. After one year they would exhaust the material for their exhortations and would be moved on to another flock which was unfamiliar with his conversion experiences. In a directory for Baltimore we find a Zaccheus McComas listed as a clothier at 75 1/2 North Howard Street. Certainly that was no church.

However, we do know that he eventually went to Hagerstown to live and that he and his wife became the forebears of a number of descendents, who were among the most prominent people in the city during the 19th Century. His grandson Louis Emory McComas was an outstanding senator in the United States Senate, who became famous for a battle he had with President Grover Cleveland. A great grandson became a distinguished clergyman, not in the Methodist church but in the Episcopal. As a young man Dr. Frederick A. McComas was rector of the famous, old church, St. Ann's, in Annapolis. While he was there he made a search to find out where Daniell's plantation had been. Later in life he became rector of the oldest Episcopal church in New York, corner of Fulton Street and Broadway. So that branch of the family evidently inherited

the political instincts and the religious strain of the previous Century.

When Zaccheus went to that little city, in the north of the State, it was sometimes called Elizabeth's Town and sometimes Hager's Town. It seems that Jonathan Hager (German) laid out the town in 1761 and named it after his beloved wife, Elizabeth. Not until 1847 did its people decide to use its present name. In 1820 it had 2,690 people and 400 negroes. About this time it could boast some 400 stone and brick buildings, some filthy streets, many unpaved; with swine roving the streets as scavengers. Some lights appeared at night in front of the taverns. Hagerstown was so unhealthy that newspapers in neighboring cities advised people to keep away from it as it was "pest ridden" (1822). It was an important slave market. Slaves from the South would slip into the city on their way to the "Free State" of Pennsylvania. "Professionals" would capture many of them and sell them back to planters from the cotton States. Newspapers of that time tell of captured slaves, who cut off their fingers, or a hand, or cracked a skull in order to escape being put up on the block in the slave market.

If Zaccheus was looking for a place to clean up physically and morally God knows he found it. And he stuck to it throughout the rest of his life. Details of that life in the growing little city I do not have. On the other hand I happen to run across a book he wrote, "A Treatise On Christianity" (1850, Heard and Durdy, Hagerstown).

For the first time we get some material about the inner life of the old-timers. In this book he tells us that in his boyhood he was shy and retiring but with a deep religious nature, which showed itself "perhaps at 8 years of age". He confessed that "the author of these pages has ever been of a reflecting and thoughtful cast of mind, but like all youths, in his younger days, was confiding and unsuspicious and supposed that all men were what they professed to be." He was attracted to the Methodist church; which was quite prominent in Harford, in fact, the first Methodist College in America was founded in Abingdon. As a boy he was very much impressed by the men and women in the Methodist church who had been "converted" and were "born of the spirit" men and women who had the "witness of the Spirit", people who told the whole world that they had become "the Children of God". He sought to have their emotional experience and happiness; and especially their confidence that "he that is born of God sinneth not".

Gradually he became somewhat critical and in his later years he wrote "In this deception is clearly seen the immanent danger of trusting to the exciteability of the feelings". Just what this danger was that Zaccheus had run across at the revivals and camp-meetings in Harford he does not say; but a book by F. M. Davenport, "Primitive Traits In Religeous Revivals", gives some lurid descriptions of what did happen in the great revivals in 1800 out in Kentucky. There the

For the first time we get some intimate account [illegible] the inner life of the Methodists. The high tone of religious [illegible] in his husband as the very man could [illegible] a deep religious passion, [illegible] & poets of "God". [illegible] people have ever been of a [illegible] of [illegible], the like all truths, [illegible] sacrifices and [illegible] which they preached to all." [illegible] Methodist [illegible] In fact, the first Methodist College [illegible] in Kingston. [illegible] and not [illegible] of the [illegible] and [illegible] of the [illegible] people [illegible] was [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] than [illegible]

[illegible] wrote "[illegible] of [illegible] that [illegible] the [illegible] by [illegible] [illegible] in the great [illegible] pioneer preachers pictured the horrors of Hell so convincingly that their hearers were terrified. They were convinced that if they did not become converted and have a tremendous "experience" their souls could not be saved. As the fiery back-woods preachers shouted and sang the people would burst into shouting and singing. They would spring up from their seats and march shouting around the church, or in the fields,if the meeting were in the open air. Curious sorts of automatisms would sieze them. Some would babble insanely,- "speaking with tongues" like the early Christians. Some would fall and lie on the ground in a sort of hypnotic trance. Some would sieze the branch of a tree and stamp like a horse. This strange behavior was thought to be good evidence that the "Spirit had reached them".

We have no evidence that the Harford revivals were comparable to those among the Scotch-Irish in Kentucky. Unquestionably there must have been a goodly supply of hysterical and neurotic men and women whose exhilaration would lead them to believe that they had received "the Baptism of the Spirit" and were in some mysterious way the "Anointed of the Lord". That led them to believe that they had direct access to God. Preachers, therefore, would have the truth directly from the Almighty. Unfortunately this type of person is not always a good character.

It is a pity that Frederick and Susannah let their boy

get tangled up in this sort of thing for it unquestionably affected his whole life. In his old age he reviews the past and shows us something of the wretchedness he had to go through.

To give an idea of his thoughts and how he expressed them I quote from his book.

"It was such a long train of facts, that admitted of no doubt of the true characters of the men and of their ruling principles, that tore up our confidence root and branch. Our strong prejudices and early impressions had not an inch of ground to stand upon. In this state of mind we voluntarily and quietly withdrew from the Methodist E. Church.....The clergy affirmed and the people believed that they are an indespensible part of God's plan of Salvation....But we, rejecting the clergy, the doors of all the churches were barred against us and we were outlawed.

"But the important question was ever returning, with more or less power and force; 'If a man die shall he live again?' And if he should live, under what circumstances would he live? Would God make any distinction after this life? What are the qualifications for a happy immortality? What is the will of God in relation to man and how is it to be infallibly known? From whence is man and what is his final destination? Can God be offended or propitiated by man, and how? Who can satisfactorily answer these questions? Who can solve our anxious doubts? More than a thousand

different answers in different ages of the World's history, have been given; but which of them all is the true one? For only one can be true, if any of them are. These questions, so deeply interesting to the peace and to the happiness of so many countless human spirits we thought must interest The Eternal Being. But has he interposed? To us it was clear that the darkness and uncertainty that enveloped these questions could be removed only by revelation. If He has, by whom, and what are the evidences? These questions at length aroused our paralized and dormant energies, and set us on the present investigation, and of the results of which this volume is the fruits. It is dedicated to all those who love the truth more than the approbation of men".

He developed his argument in his book about as follows. First of all, it is impossible to get any conception of God unless He reveals Himself to men in a way that men can understand and that He has done in the inspired books of the Bible. Secondly, He sent His own son into the World that men might understand the nature of God more perfectly and to learn from Him the principles of true religion. Third, the men who accept Christ's teachings and who are associated in His name constitute the Christian Church. Fourth, Christ settled a permanent form of government for His church and put authority in the hands of His disciples. Fifth, the Clergy arose and vitiated Christ's teachings with vain and ruinous assumptions.

For a book that came out exactly a hundred years ago it was timely and vigorous. It cut fiercely at the underpinning of a lot of unwarranted ideas that had grown up not only in his church but in other Protestant churches as well. His determination to bring the understanding of what Christianity really is back to the original sources and away from the accretions of the theologians was logical and in his time courageous. Since his day the scholarly study of the Scriptures makes it impossible to consider them the Inspired Word of God. So arguments that seemed pungent ten years before the Civil War seem as obsolete to us as the old arguments about secession.

Personally I find a curious satisfaction in following the thoughts and feelings of a McComas in the past century as he discussed his religious experience and the doubts which followed. My own life has not been altogether unlike his.

WILLIAM AND ELLEN

No estimate of a man's character, or ability, can be made without considering the times and conditions in which he lived. William was born 7 years after the last gun in the Revolution had been fired. The exhilaration of that great victory was still alive, and it merged into the spirit of daring and enterprise that showed itself in so many ways. Not the least of these was the way in which the young nation plunged itself into a second War with Great Britain. Baltimore was a leader in this new age. From a few scattered houses in Revolutionary times she had grown into a city of 40,000 inhabitants not including 5,000 slaves, when the War broke out in 1812. By that time she was the third city in the Nation, a great port and shipping center. She made contacts with the whole world. In her newspapers of that period you could read where to buy LaGuaira coffee, Russia duck, Smyrna madder roots, New Orleans cotton, Muscovado in hogsheads and Spanish tobacco in bundles. A visitor in 1811 said that there were over 100 ships at the wharves and more than 200 large ships in the mouth of the harbor.

A letter from a Mr. S. Weyman to his brother in Boston in 1816 gives a picture of some of the activity in Baltimore. Mr. Weyman came from Roxbury, Massachusetts. The letter reads as follows:-

"From appearances I should judge there was more business done here in one day than is done in Boston in a week. There is generally from 150 to 200 large covered country wagons with

from four to six horses that stand in Howard Street day and night laden with country produce; say, wheat, flour, pork etc. etc. Hogs are driven into this market from Ohio 600 miles; some droves contain 1300, some 1500... There is a public auction here of negroes sold like horses to the highest bidder. Sometimes whole negro families are sold. You may judge the number of negroes in the city when I state there are more than 20 in my hotel.

"Men of the same interest and standing are not so distant, crabbed and lofty as the Bostonians but take pleasure in conversing and affording information to strangers.

"Board in respectable houses is $6 per week and $3 per month for washing."

Of course, during the War years, 1812-14, Baltimore suffered bitterly as the port was blockaded and only few ships could bring in imports, or carry exports. When peace was declared the famous Clipper Ships of Baltimore came back to the home harbor and an enormous trade sprang up with foreign countries. This great revival of business in shipping spread to other activities. Real estate values soared, building increased, rents were exorbitant.

Then came the usual reaction. In 1818 there was a panic. Real estate values dropped, many business men were ruined. In the space of a few weeks the stock in the Bank of the United States dropped to one third of its value.

Then came the inevitable return to prosperity. Shipping

once more flourished. Quite a large section of the country around Baltimore sent its products for exportation to that port. By 1823 the old spirit of enterprise was in full swing and subscriptions were being taken to build the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. By this Canal the business men hoped to capture the trade of the great areas west of Maryland.

Into this hustling little metropolis, came William McComas, some time before his 18th year. The first information we have about him comes from the old directories of Baltimore and they are not a very good source of information. William was living at 36 High Street in 1808. This little two story house looks very neat and trim today. We may hope that it appeared that way in the years when it was well on the outskirts of the town and the streets were notoriously badly paved. Here he lived for some ten years. On November the 21st, 1815 he married Ellen Fort, a girl 17 years old. In the next year on October the 20th his son Henry Gough was born. The next son, William K. was born in August 1818. We find another name at that residence, Mary McComas, in the year 1816. She might have been his grandfather's widow, as old William died in 1815 and left a widow by that name. With five people in that small house William moved over to the other side of the city in 1818. Another reason may have been that the western side of the city was thought to be healthier than "Old Town".

Just what William did when he moved into 36 High Street in 1808 is a nice question. Two years later he was listed as "Superintendont of Sweeps". Did his sweeps sweep chimneys

or streets? Our next bit of information appears in the directory for 1819; then he is living on Park Lane and is listed as a "carpenter". In 1822 he is listed as a "house carpenter". Quite a distinction existed between those two sorts of occupation. A carpenter might work by the day for other people on various buildings, or he might have his own shop and make chairs, tables, cabinets and other kinds of furniture. We know that William was an expert craftsman from the splendid pieces of furniture that have come down the family from his hands. House carpenters in those days were builders and they would take contracts for one or a row of houses. To do this a man needed some capital. From 1822 to 1836 William is listed as a house carpenter. 1837 presents a surprise. William shows up on Baltimore Street with a dry goods store. Surely, this is a very different business from building houses. Nevertheless, he must have been successful in it for some six years, and that is to his credit. Any business can blow up in less time than that. In 1843 there is another surprise. It reads "William McComas dwelling at Baltimore Street between Pine and Cove", and also this entry "Mrs. Ellen F. McComas Baltimore Street between Pine and Cove". Observe two things, William was "dwelling" here. It says nothing about his business. Also, his wife's name appears for the first time in the directory. In the issue for 1845 we learn that Mrs. Ellen McComas was a dress maker at 496 West Baltimore Street and mentions incidentally that William dwelt there. The 1847-48 book gives this, "Mrs. Ellen McComas, Mantua maker and dry goods dealer" and does not even mention

William. Issues up to 1861, when the Civil War broke out, contain the same items except that the address has changed to 502 and 504 West Baltimore Street, which were devoted to the business.

It is this last 15 years that William and Ellen spent on Baltimore Street that gave rise to the family tradition about Ellen. My father and my uncle both remembered their formidable grandmother. From them I have gotten the idea that she was the brains and the driving force and that William was an austere old gentleman that did not carry much weight. This seems to be the impression that my cousins, also, have. The story as it has come down the years is to the effect that Ellen built up a large business catering to the wives of wealthy planters from the South; who brought their families up to Baltimore to be clothed according to the accepted styles. She is known to have had her reception room in the building at 504 Baltimore Street and dwelling rooms for her family in both 502 and 504; but the upper stories were given over to the cutting and the sewing. Some 20 girls worked for her. The inventory of her estate when she died in 1861 shows that she had some $12,000 owing her in accounts receivable. Many of the names of her customers were among the prominent people of the city. Her debts for merchandise ran over $20,000. These figures show clearly that she was conducting quite a large business for her time. Indeed, what she was doing could be considered a remarkable achievement for any woman at any time.

I am confident that the family tradition is not correct. It must be remembered that William, the house builder, had earned enough money to take over a dry goods business and to buy the two houses on Baltimore Street, as well as several others. It was evidently a good and going concern that Ellen took over from her husband. Just why did he ease out of the picture? He was a builder and just about this time they both became interested in obtaining farms in Harford County. That required the building of several new houses and it seems very probable that William put in his time on that project. That was the sort of thing he could enjoy much more than measuring dry goods. So far as the worldly success of William is concerned in comparison with that of his vigorous consort his inventory shows that he was in no mean circumstances himself.

However, the family tradition has it that Ellen made a large fortune and then bought a number of farms around and including a part of Gresham's Colledge. Her purpose in this was to get her family away from the wicked city of Baltimore, as she was a woman with strong religious convictions. She is given credit for being a devout member of the "Christian Mountain Church". And we have been told that she gave the property to the church when it was built. But I find in the record that old William was also mixed up in the deal and that he was a trustee of the church. William has a way of redeeming his reputation as he pops up here and there in the old

records. This persistent tradition that she wanted to get her children out of the wicked city of Baltimore seems to point its finger directly at the old sea-captain. Any one can see that Gresham's Colledge would be a more salutary environment than the water front, but we know that Captain Henry spent his Summers in the county, so he evidently loved it and needed no inducement to go up there to live.

Some other items in the record run counter to the idea that Ellen suddenly started a moral crusade for the betterment of her off-spring. We find mention of her inheriting a piece of property in the county. Then we find a number of entries in which these two shrewd business people in Baltimore picked up tracts of land adjoining each other in the very region where the Four Brothers settled.

Whether Ellen was a lovable personality or not, she was a sturdy and colorful character. Note the way she spaces the coming of her children into the world. A year after she was married her first boy was born, in 1816, her second, in 1818; three years later George Marsh came into the world. Then there is a lapse of four years when Laura Amelia appeared. Then after a lapse of six years came Maria Louisa, in 1831; John Fort was born in 1836; and Emily in 1842.

A few stories have come down to me about this redoubtable lady.

Ellen, occasionally would have a sort of camp meeting in which her church friends and people from the country side would gather. There was singing, exhortations and baptisms

for the converts. The farm would be over-run with these enthusiasts. Then William would take a gallon of whiskey and retire to the barn until the visitors had gone. Is that what the psychiatrists of today call an "escape mechanism?"

She kept some dresses for the women converts to wear when they went down into the water to be baptized. The skirts were weighted down with gunshot to keep them from floating up, when the women waded out into water up to their shoulders. Her little grandsons, George and Clay, cut the shot out of the hems to use in their guns. When the women went down the skirts went up.

It seems altogether possible that the old lady might not have entertained very kindly feelings toward the grandchildren, who were the offspring of the unmanageable sea-captain. Certainly, this incident was not calculated to deepen her affection for little Clay. On a quiet Sunday afternoon one summer he was hitching his goat to a little cart. Ellen was taking a stroll, her parasol raised, her wide crinoline skirts swaying gracefully as she walked and her pair of long white pantaletts twinkled down below the edge of the skirts. Little Clay did not make a good contact between his goat and the cart, but there was a wonderful contact made between the goat and the old lady. Even in his old age my father could recall the horror and the delight in seeing the old lady horizontal on the grass and those two white pantaletts waving in the air.

Surely escapades of this sort would not prejudice her

against the children of her son Henry, but she certainly did not seem to care for them as she did for the others. That seems apparent from her will. When we examine the old photograph which accompanies this chapter we cannot help wondering why George, Isabel and Clay are not in it. Ellen surely had known when the photographer was coming and the children lived within a five minutes walk from where the picture was taken.

This old photograph was taken before William died in 1858, and on the original it states that it was made by Weaver and Bachrach and was negative number 108, and the address was 147 East Baltimore Street. Then follows this item "Copies of this picture can be had by addressing the above with name and number of negative". In a recent conversation with Mr. Bachrach, who is a descendent of the old firm, I learned that their records for these early photographs had been lost. This splendid frame house was built for the son, George William McComas. And it stands today in an excellent state of preservation.

Let us study the portraits that stand out with such remarkable clearness. On the extreme left is Derick Keyser who married Laura McComas in 1844. Next to him is his wife standing behind a little flagpole. The flag has been taken off and hung upon the porch. Just beneath the flag stands William McComas. He seems to be a tall man, but certainly not as tall as his younger brother Henry was at 18 years of age. Next to him sits a demure, little girl, Lilly McComas,

the daughter of George M. McComas. The story of her life is a pathetic one. When she was some ten years older than she appears in this picture she met a Dr. Eckfelt, a Philadelphia physician, and apparently an excellent man. For some reason she became an alcoholic addict and went steadily down in her vicious habits until the Doctor could not keep her in his home. She died in a deplorable condition. Just back of little Lilly sits the rigid Ellen. Small as her face appears in this picture it seems to have an austere expression. Nearly 60 years of age, her hair shows no evidence of grey. On the porch with her are two negroes. Of one thing we can be positive, they are not slaves; for there is no slave in the inventories of either William, or Ellen, and they both died a short time after this picture was taken.

It would seem from this photograph that this picture must have been taken on the occasion of some National anniversary for there is a very large American flag hanging behind Ellen and the two negroes. The owner of this house was a strong Union man and a great friend of the negroes.

Seated just in front of Lilly McComas is a very pretty girl by the name of Mary Keyser. Her features, also, appear in another picture that we will observe later. They intrigue me for some of her descendents of today certainly have her features. Seated beside Mary is little Willie McClenahan and he is the son of Maria Louisa and H. B. McClenahan. His mother had died

two years before. From the wills of the old folks this youngster was very dear to them. He left Maryland when he reached manhood, went to Minnesota, became a Judge, and has now a son who is a professor in the University of Pittsburgh. Immediately at Willie's left is William Marsh McComas. Perhaps he was closer to the old folks than any other of their sons. Ellen speaks of him, in her will, as being better acquainted with her interests than any of the others. She trusted him with the administration of her estate, but he did not make a very good job of it. For example, he bought a house for his sister Emily, who is standing beside him, on Madison Avenue for $14,000. Not many years later it sold for around $1400. Perhaps it is not fair to cite this as an example of his business acumen. He must have had some business ability for he ran a tobacco business in Baltimore for a number of years and at one time was the Collector of the Port. After the Civil War, the Republicans in Maryland who showed any concern for the condition of the freed slaves, were looked down upon with contempt. They were called "Black Republicans" and, also, "Nigger Lovers". Despite that unfriendly atmosphere he succeeded in getting enough money from the Freedman's Bureau to build a school and a church for the negroes not far from his home. These buildings are still standing. On the front of the school one can still read "McComas Institute 1867".

Immediately in front of George Marsh sits his wife who was a Margarritta Witmer whom he married in 1852. I can only

account for the expression on her mouth by assuming that she happened to have it that way when the photographer started his one minute exposure and so she held it that way for fear of blurring the picture. Personally, I think a blurr would have been preferable. On the extreme left the dashing young lady is Emily, about 17 years of age. When I knew her nearly 40 years after this picture was taken she was full of life and fun. She could enter into the life of her two boys with a sort of Tom-boy's relish. Everyone liked her. A short time after she moved into Lutherville she knew everyone in town. Please observe her get-up. She is in a riding costume. A little whip and handkerchief are in her left hand and she seems to be holding the pole from one of the flags in her other hand. Not many years after this her brother George brought a friend of his, Herman Platt, a packer, on a visit to the country, a romance started and they were married. They had two sons, Herman and James.

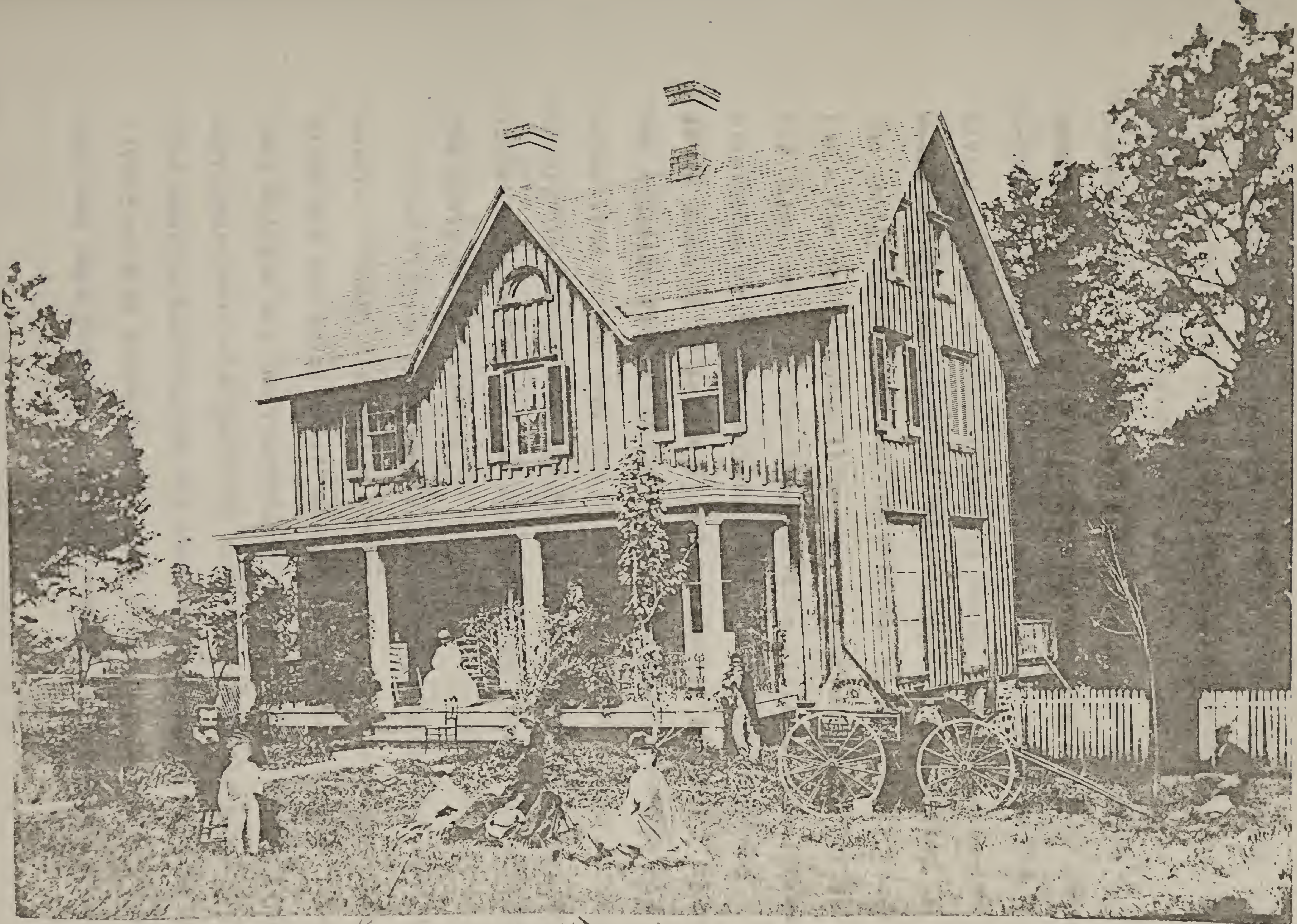
These old pictures help ones imagination to conceive the sort of life that the family enjoyed in the country, at least on the porch of one of the most attractive houses up there. Everyone seems to be very well dressed and in an amiable frame of mind, though the sun was shining in their eyes. The two well dressed servants would seem to argue that the women were not hampered by too much household drudgery. Laura and Margaritta were left the business on Baltimore Street so they may have been career women in those days. Unfortunately the Civil War quickly ended their careers.

The house that appears in this picture was known as "Linwood". It has a quaint charm of its own. The stairway, which comes down to the front door, has a baluster which is extremely graceful and which on close examination shows that it was hand-hewn. This could well have been a product of old William's handiwork. The glass door knobs, the panelling in the doors, the windows with the waves in the panes (which can be seen in the photograph) all contribute to help you slip back a century and get some notion of the old home.

Nearly a mile south of Linwood was the farm called "Clayton" where William and Ellen lived. It was a large frame house placed in the center of broad, level fields. The colored glass windows on either side of the door would give an artist vertigo. It was roomy and I imagine comfortable, but when I saw it it had been a hide-out for bootleggers, during the prohibition period, and the whole floor of the dining room had been ripped out to make room for a still. There was no way of getting the "atmosphere" of the last century from that delapidated, old house. When William and Ellen lived there it must have been quite pretentious. To approach it you had to pass a porter's lodge and then follow the winding road between the cedars to the wide front porch. A few years ago it burned to the ground and no evidence of it remains today. Between Clayton and Linwood was a place called "Antioch". It was there, we recall, that Ann McComas the daughter of one of the Four Brothers had bought a plantation the previous century and it was here that William K. lived. Following up the road toward Linwood one crosses a beautiful stream. (I have often

hunted partridges along its banks). On the left hand side of the road, a century ago, stood another of these houses to accommodate another McComas family. In this instance it was the home of the second daughter, Maria Louisa, who had married H. B. McClanahan in 1853 and this young married couple called their home "Woodburn". Just to the north of Woodburn and to the west of Linwood was the home of their first daughter, Laura Amelia, who had married D. W. Keyser in 1844. The name of their home was "Amsterdam". It is still standing and looks very much like the photograph that was taken in 1858. At the extreme left is Derrick Keyser. Someone has written Will McClanahan to indicate the boy standing by Keyser's knee. I am sure that was wrong. Willie seems to be lying on the grass near the porch. No one has ventured a guess as to who the lady in white might be, sitting on the porch. I fancy the girl behind the bush is Emily. Following the lead of someone, who in years past, wrote these names in the margin; we can easily identify Lily McComas and the elder daughter of the Keysers who later married Theodore Clayton. This Mary Keyser has very attractive regular features, and these same features can be seen in a great granddaughter of today. The younger girl was evidently named for her grandmother, and seems to be posing in a remarkable dress for a child. The number of this negative was 108.

Over to the east of Linwood was the home of Captain Henry, "Glenwood". Before the family moved to the County we have this entry in the Land Records to the effect that Philip R. Davis


[illegible] Lily McCarren (Whitfield) [illegible]

Ellen [illegible]

Mary C. Hayes ([illegible])

sold to William McComas and his wife Ellen, April 19th, 1853, "all that tract or parcel of land called Gresham's Colledge in Harford County on the West side of Winter's Run..... Beginning for the same at a stone let in the ground marked number one, in the division line between the heirs of Daniel McComas and Josiah S. McComas, and running north to the dividing lines of Daniel McComas Senior and the heirs of Moses McComas deceased..." This old property had been in the family since 1729 and was only out of the family hands for a few years, while it was in the possession of Davis. Now, here was a job for house-builder William. The pioneer plantation house was too small for the Captain's family. If we think of it as the stem on a capital letter "T" then the addition William built on would be represented by the cross line at the top. To my day this addition was referred to as "The new part of the house". It was good, roomy, comfortable house, but it certainly was not in the class with the newly built Linwood.

Why William and Ellen selected these tracts of land is a puzzle. Though the family tradition is to the effect that Ellen was the prime mover in this enterprise it seems to me that William was the responsible party. He must have been born near there and spent his boyhood in that locality. In that case he had cousins all over this region and actually living on this property. He must have known it well. During the long hard years when he was working in Baltimore with the

sweeps, making articles of furniture, contracting for and building houses, and finally building up a dry goods business; he must have thought many times of the happy scenes of his boyhood. There is no reason to think that this rugged, old gentleman was a sentimentalist,- surely no poet. Nevertheless he may have shared the feelings of the poet who wrote:

"Happy is he who neither wealth nor fashion
Nor the march of the encroaching city
Drives an exile, from the earth of his ancestral home."

I have another reason for thinking that William was a man of some feeling. I have before me his old family Bible with his name stamped upon the cover. In his hand-writing are entered a number of the entries for births, deaths and marriages of his family. More impressive than these are the newspaper clippings concerning the death of his brother at North Point. The last of these, the old gentleman entered in the last September that he lived. What evidently caught his eye was the following:-

"With a superior force they landed, and when their General with his picket guard undertook to reconnointre the ground there were two brave spirits near to watch and check the carnage that had been promised upon the people of Baltimore, D. Wells and H. G. McComas were on the alert, and with steady arm their unerring rifles slew the Commander, though their own lives paid the penalty of their love of Country. Their names are still embalmed in the memory of the people of Baltimore,

and will ever remain so, as their heroism threw confusion into the ranks of the enemy enabling our militia to drive off the legions of the invaders. There those who recollect with what emotions of pain they awaited the results of the struggle of that day, and many hearts were made glad by the safe return of sons and husbands, while others were called to mourn the loss of those who laid down their lives on their Country's altar". When he pasted that article in his Bible he was probably thinking of the Sunday night over 40 years before when he bade his brother good-bye on the steps of the little house in High Street, and the cruel experience of finding the brother in his bloody and dirty green uniform. Of course, we knew he never forgot the walk from North Point to the cemetery on Broadway.

Naturally, the question arises, why was not William in the militia, both of his brothers were. Zaccheus was in the first Maryland regiment. At that time men were joining the regiments without any military experience. Some of these organizations were simply no good at all. For example, the 51st was made up of boys from the outskirts of the city. They broke ranks and ran at the very beginning of the action. As General Stricker said "It delivered one random fire and retreated precipitately, and in such confusion as to render every effort of mine to rouse them ineffective." Now what was the use of a skilled carpenter adding one more person to a mob like that? General Samuel Smith was broadcasting for men to help build the redoubts around Patterson Park, to strengthen Fort McHenry, to shore up breast-works in many

places. This called for cutting, fitting and fastening heavy timbers and planking. So there were many places where a good carpenter could really do something to help the situation. Truly it was not a duty to bring glory or renown. William did not care for that. After the battle, when his brother had made the Aisquith Sharp Shooters famous, he was invited to join their ranks as an honorary member. He refused.

In our effort to understand the lives and characters of the members of the family that lived before William and Ellen we found that a consideration of their wills and inventory threw quite a little light upon them. Let us take a look at such documents in connection with William and Ellen.

In a will dated June the 1st 1855 William left a farm on Gresham's Colledge to his eldest son Henry. To his son William K. he left a farm in Harford County on a track called "Homer Resurveyed" and also two houses on Schroeder Street in Baltimore. To his son George Marsh he left one of the houses on Baltimore street with this proviso that he take good care of certain of the children. The other house on Baltimore Street he left to his daughter Emily and at the same time stated that the other two daughters would be cared for in the will of their Mother.

He appointed his wife and his son George Marsh as executors and then added that if his wife died before he did his son Henry Gough should serve in her place. When we read Ellen's will we shall see how badly Captain Henry fared in comparison with the others.

When we come to the inventory of William's personal effects we find a document that is far and away unlike anything we have yet encountered. It certainly has three hundred items listed in it, and such items! There is everything imaginable for the farm and the home. My eye happens to alight, at this moment, upon two items side by side; a box of matches, 60 cents, 78 bars of soap $3.12. And then we find in another spot 50 whiskey barrels, $8; a pleasure carriage $30; a two horse wagon $32. Corn in the ground $26; a spittoon 18 cents; 25 pounds of tea $10; a black tea pot $1.25. Some items would seem to indicate that he owned some of the stock in the store in Baltimore Street, for example, 44 yards of black calico $4.18. Then there is a list of "lots" of thread and buttons, combs, cotton thread, hose and gloves, and also hats. I certainly hope that these items were connected with the store and not for home use,- 15 gallons of whiskey, $4; 20 gallons of rum, $8; and 6 pounds of snuff $1. When all these odds and ends are added up they come to $1,662.37. What a violent contrast this list of items makes with the inventories of the Four Brothers!

Ellen made out her will December 17th 1859 and it is certainly a very clear and well-thought-out document. She first provides that all of her debts are to be paid and then her business is to be turned over to her daughter Laura

Keyser and to the wife of her son, George Marsh. Then she provides that the two houses on Schroeder Street which she had bought be sold and used to pay her debts; and, if there is any money remaining, it was to be divided between her grandchildren George William McComas, Henry Clay McComas and Isabella McComas. She probably thought that there would be no money left over, in which case she directed that her other heirs should be assessed proportionately, to cover what was necessary. Now there was no money left over from the sale of these houses after her debts were paid, as the old lady probably knew. As a result her three little grandchildren received nothing but the farm which her husband left them. That they had a terrible struggle to make ends meet is a fact that my father remarked upon many times.

In contrast with this, note, her generosity in her attitude toward her daughter Emily. Emily had already received a house on Baltimore Street in her Father's will. Now her mother bequeaths her a house on Raborg Street just in the rear of the Baltimore Street house. In addition to all that Emily was to receive the home known as "Woodburn" where the McClenahans were then living. There was a condition to that bequest. They were to continue to live there until little Willie reached the age of 21, at their own expense. However, all of Ellen's personal property on the farm was to go to Emily. These provisions for her daughter constituted quite a fortune for those days. Emily was about the same age as

the children of Captain Henry. She was left in affluence and they were left in poverty.

To her son William K. she left the place known as "Antioch" though she said it was in the name of her other son George Marsh.

Here is a clever item. The debt of $2500 that her son-in-law, H. B. McClenahan owed her was to be transferred to her grandson, William S. McClenahan. Then she released all of her children and grandchildren from "all charges and entries that may appear on my books against them."

Lastly she appointed George Marsh McComas executor. As he was "better acquainted with her business wishes and intentions." She especially committed her daughter, Emily, and her grandson, William, to his care.

Perhaps this old woman felt that she was not dealing fairly with all of her heirs and that there was a possibility that some of them might try to break the will, To prevent that she added this final clause, -

It is my wish that they avoid litigation and disputes; but if they do, an independent committee of three persons shall be appointed. If someone will not abide by that decision, "and shall appeal therefrom to any court; then, in that case, I hereby revoke annul and declare void and of no effect the devise or bequest herein contained to and in favor such non-concurring party or parties". In Ellen's inventory we find that her accounts receivable $12,837.22 were considerably smaller than her debts owing $23,577.63. But she

had so much merchandise on hand that she was probably in quite a comfortable position, financially.

In Ellen's day debts were divided into two classes. There were the "sperate debts". The word comes from "spero" which means "I hope" in Latin, and I have hopes in business. "Desperate debts" were those from which all hope had fled. Ellen had $4431.56 desperate debts.

Perhaps this is what she was thinking about when she had her picture taken.

Since writing the above paragraph I have found a most interesting diary kept by Hugh B. McClenahan the father of the little boy whom we saw in the picture of Linwood. He had married Amelia McComas a few years before this and they had been living at Woodbourn with their son. She had died a year before this diary was written and according to his notation he was still mourning his loss, living alone with his son. I have selected a half a dozen dates at random and will quote his entries verbatim. The purpose in this is to give a first hand impression of what life was like on those farms in Harford County in the spring of the year 1858. These brief little sentences sketch out a picture that is so real and intimate that one feels carried back a hundred years to the life of that period. It was in this year 1858 that the old sea captain died. He was evidently at home when this diary was written as he is mentioned several times. These old worn pages, evidently taken from a leger, would indicate that all members of the family cooperated in working the farms. However it seems that Ellen and her son George M. were living in Baltimore and came

up in their carriages or in the stage-coach on Saturdays and stayed over until Monday.

March 16th, 1858. Day similar to yesterday- very warm. Oppressive with winter clothes on- hands very sore- could get no one to work- Mary the new girl came at 10 A.M. In aft. went with Dragon in cart to Lee's- bought materials for comforts etc. Also a four quarter of beef at eight cents weighing 84 lbs.: 6.72- engaged Arthur to plow tomorrow.

April 1st, 1858. All Fools' Day- white frost again last night - three in succession - mild morning - wind rose and blew briskly all day from S. E. and E. - tonight cloudy.

Arthur sowed clover seed till wind too high then hauled balance of sawed stuff from Martin's Mill. In aft. hauled off sawed pieces, very large, of white oak - then to George McC - brought home cask, bones and sulph. acid etc. Self very busy, broken down tonight. Unloaded shells - went to Hannah McC borrowed a chain - also to Osburn's then to George McC for acid bones etc got 6 1/2 bushels.

April 15th, 1858. Cool and mostly cloudy wind N.W. Busy day - Blasted and split with wedges all the remaining logs of old chestnut limbs - grubbing on lawn and assisting Philip to haul off logs - Philip in forenoon hauled scrapping etc in cart to clear yard and fill up old road in front of the house - in aft. with both mules and a long chain hauled off logs etc. Manages mules badly.

May 1st, 1858. Very warm day, mild wind from S.W. - at three - four o'clock P.M. thunder - showers in various places

around - no rain here, but a few drops at night - cloudy now 9 P.M. Arthur spent day in rolling lawn and going to mill - started 4 1/2 P.M. - not home till after 8 P.M. Joe assisted to sew seed - then worked in garden - planting beet seed and potatoes - finished at night - Mary assisted in "dropping". Self sowed lawn, grubbed on it - covered potatoes - planted corn and beans - very hard day's work.

Mr. McC and Mr. Dickinson came in buggy.

May 15th, 1858. Rained during the night and early morning. Ground much too wet for planting - cleared off by 9 A.M. - warm beautiful day - wind S.W.

Went early to William McC - tried to get a chain or something with which to haul hay - unsuccessful.

Then with Joe and two mules to Hy McC - he had gone with Clay and Tom in carriage -

George Criswell being engaged, or not willing to come I got Jno M. and Ned (horse) - making with Bill - four in Hy McC's wagon - called at mill and got 8 bushels of shorts and a hundred pound chop. Went to Osborns - and got a load of hay after some trouble - then spent an hour trying to back out of barn - at last took out all horses and run the wagon down the bridge at great speed - barely escaping what -

Before got outside of place half load tumbled off - dreadful roads - to put this on took one to two hours - various other stoppages kept us till near 5 P.M. when we got home - Arthur worked half day gathering roots and aft. unloading hay - hauling off roots.

Mrs. McC and George came from Baltimore.

Meeting at Prices' of Hy McC and Ham. Garrison - very pleasant! (Note, Price's Tavern was about two miles from the farm and was a favorite haunt of Hy McC, the old sea captain).

June 1st, 1858. Joe went early to Hy McC's - got loan of wagon to haul hay - Bill came at 7 1/2 P.M. - engaged him to assist. They took mules and cart with scantling for making shelves - started between eight and nine according to Peter Bishop - home with load at 4 1/2 P.M. - Joe so drunk as not to be able to stand - drove mules into the wood pile and rolled off wagon - Bill much in liquor and quite saucy - sent him home with wagon 5 1/2 oclk P.M. His wife here today washing - Bill fed hores and sawed wood - paid him and Joe - discharged both - sunshine all day - warm -

AROUND THE HORN IN '52

Certainly it would seem that we should know a great deal about a certain "Captain Courageous", Henry Gough McComas; for all of us, who are his grandchildren, knew and loved his wife and we are also the offspring of those two boys and daughter to whom he so often refers as "G. W. little Hen and Bell". Nevertheless, I have but very little material concerning him which has come down by word of mouth; and, also, very little in the way of documents. I am sure that my sisters and cousins will agree with me that our grandmother seemed to speak about her husband rather reluctantly and our parents seemed to know almost nothing about him. Father told me that he hardly knew him for he was so seldom home. I have a feeling that there was a rather strong resentment on the part of his wife and children that he did not spend more time with them and provide more generously for his family. I can still remember my grandmother describing him as a man who was as broad as he was tall but who had "the most beautiful brown eyes"; and once or twice she remarked that he was the "black sheep" of the family; but she had loved him all her life. I have two little incidents told me about the vigorous temper of the stout Captain. When my father was a boy he was riding in a buggy with the old gentleman along a quiet road in Harford County. Another buggy approached them; both buggies stopped to enable the men to enjoy a nice, long conversation. Gradually it drifted into politics. the adjectives got hotter and hotter, then the Captain

disembarked from the buggy threw, his coat on the ground and invited his opponent to step down and get the worst beating he ever had.

The other anecdote was told me by my cousin, Laura Keyser, some years ago when she was about 80 years of age. When she was a little girl playing around the old home in Harford County the Captain lay in his room, on the second floor, slowly dying with pneumonia. This he had contracted from exposure in the sea after a ship-wreck off the coast of Brazil. It seems that little Laura was bitten by a dog, her cries aroused the old Captain and he came down the steps in his bed clothes with the determination "to kill that dam' dog".

Now here is another snap-shot of the Captain on his way home to see his wife after a voyage at sea. This comes to me from a cousin who got it from his father. On the side of the road which led to his home, about two miles away, stood a tavern,- an inviting place. When the Captain left the stage-coach to walk over to his home the cheery lights of the tavern evidently invited him in for a sociable drink by way of celebrating his home coming. Some celebration. They sent over for him the next day to help him get home.

That sort of a yarn may be responsible for the idea that his descendents of today entertain to the effect that he was a hard drinker. I have the impression that all of the deep-sea captains of that day were not teetotalers. Whether he drank little or much it could not have hurt that tremendous physique

of his. Surely that is proven by the fact that he navigated the smallest ship that had gone around the Horn in his day, - a job that called for a Captain and two mates and which he accomplished alone with six negro sailors.

It is a matter of keen regret to me that we have so little material with which to give any idea of the most picturesque figure on the family tree. All that I can do is to patch together the few items I have been able to collect. Then I am going to try an innovation. You have often read "The Life And Letters" of some interesting character. We have not much about the life of the Captain, but we do have some absorbing letters that passed between the daughty old sea-dog and his wife. Maybe, they will tell you what you would like to know about him.

Henry Gough McComas was born October the 23rd 1816 in the little house that his father William had on High Street. It was just two years since his uncle had been shot at North Point. Here he lived for two years, when the family moved over to the other side of the town. All the homes in which he lived as a boy were within easy walking distance of the long rows of sailing ships tied up to the wharfs. They must have been the most interesting things in Baltimore. Flags from all over the world hung from their masts. Strange and interesting cargoes came out of their holds. Sailors! What a group of enchanting characters they were! All sorts of languages could be heard on the streets near the vessels. Any small boy could hear tales in that part of the town that would make the Arabian Nights seem drab. True, the environment left something to be desired

with its dirty dives its horribly drunken tars and the painted prostitutes, to say nothing of the thievery and the bloody fights.

One could get an education there.

In strong opposition to the influence of the Sea must have been the influence of his mother. Ellen Forte McComas was a positive character and a very intelligent woman. Somehow or other she saw to it that Henry got a good education for his time, I believe. This I base upon the reading of his letters where the English and the spelling are good, though the punctuation is absent. They strike me as about on a level with the kind of English I have run across in high school students about 15 years old. Of one thing we may be sure he must have had a good drilling in mathematics and navigation.

It seems that at about 16 years of age he left home and went off to Sea. Of course, there were many boys of his age and younger in the old wind-jammers at that time. Some sort of duties were given them before the time that they could ship "before the mast" and become able bodied seamen.

What voyages he made and what hardships he endured, during these early years, have left no record. Had he prospered sufficiently to embark upon matrimony? Here is a statement that comes down the years from his wife. There was a little party being held in Harford County and she remarked, "I am going to marry the best looking man who comes to this party." Then she selected the young sailor who probably had gotten his "shore

legs" by that time. Undoubtedly, he did not know what was happening to him, probably thinking that he was using a good deal of judgment in selecting a wife. At that time he was 24 and she was 28. However this affair started and developed they certainly were deeply in love with each other through out all the years of their lives.

It would seem that the very strong attachment they felt for each other should have kept them together. Instead of that he was away from her the greater part of his life. There seems to be a complete unanimity in the family that this sea-dog simply would not stay on a farm. That reminds me of a song which went the rounds during the First World War, "How Do You Expect Them To Stay On The Farm After They Have Seen Paree"? The Captain had seen about every great city in the world. Fifty acres of Gresham's Colledge must have looked rather minute compared with what he had been seeing. However, I am inclined to think that there was something more deep-seated and vital than a "wander-lust", that made it just about impossible for him to settle down into a quiet life. Surely, we have all met men who seemed to be impelled to live a life of adventure and activity. Possibly, this is more natural to human nature than the type of men we find fitting smoothly into the occupations that civilization offers them. That would seem probable from what we know about Evolution. After the First World War, when I was working in a Laboratory in Princeton University on experiments with some students who had just gotten out of the Service, we would often become very well

acquainted. Some of them told me that they looked upon the quiet life in store for them with something like horror. One youngster, I remember well, had been in aviation. Once his plane came down in the Atlantic. He spent the night hanging onto a life preserver and was not rescued until sometime the following morning. Did that satisfy his taste for aviation? By no means. He was hoping to get a job in an "air control" in connection with forest fires. That seemed like heaven compared with the perdition of taking his place in his father's well established business. Whether we like it, or not, there are men who cannot adjust themselves to the hum-drum life of most occupations. Perhaps, the old Captain represented a throw-back to the old Viking spirit. No Viking ever made as long and as hard a trip as he did around Cape Horn in '52.

He was married in 1840 and may have lived in Harford County for a few years, as it seems that his children were born there in an old stone house on Gresham's Colledge, where their ancestors had lived. However, in 1846 we find in the letters to his wife that she was living in a house at the corner of Pine and Baltimore streets. At this time he was making voyages along the coast of North Carolina and George. Just what his journeys were we can only infer from the addresses on the letters he received. In January he was in Norfolk, Virginia; in February he was in Elizabeth City, North Carolina; and in April, and, also, in August of that year, he was in Savannah, Georgia. From these letters it would seem

that he was master of a ship and could plan her trips and select her cargoes.

Some time later, in 1847, he appears to be engaged in making trips to Europe for now we find his wife's letters being sent to New York, to be delivered to him aboard ship. From the letters it would seem that he had recently come from London and was waiting for his ship to make a return voyage to Europe. With very few friends in the city the Captain spent most of his time in patiently waiting for his ship to receive enough cargo to make her departure.

New York at that time seems to have been a rather unattractive city, from his description. It was hot, dirty and infested with cholrea. What cause the riot, that he speaks of, we do not know but we do recall that New York was subject to numerous riots before and during the Civil War. At this time the U. S. was waging a War with Mexico,

It would seem that with the old Captain's love of adventure that he would naturally have drifted into the War with Mexico. Maybe he refrained because of a conviction that the War was unwarranted. That was his wife's conviction. This she told me in her old age when I was inquiring about her recollections of the Mexican and Civil Wars.

From the apprehension that both he and his wife had concerning the dangers incident to a sailing vessel's voyages to Europe, we might assume that the Captain was getting all the excitement that he wanted.

However, read the letters that follow and draw your own inferences.

What about his home life during these years? Apparently his family was now living in Baltimore as we find in the Baltimore directory for 1847-48 a Captain H. G. McComas at 330 Lexington Street. In 1849 his address was 476 Baltimore Street, ten doors from his parents home. During 1849-50 his name appears as a "Mariner" at Hollins Street and Fremont. Then in 1851 he is again referred to as Captain and was living at 12 Hollins Street. This house is still standing and appears to be well-built and comfortable. The letter he sent from Valparaiso was addressed to 496 Baltimore Street which as we know was the house in which his Mother Ellen had her establishment.

In a book entitled "Portrait and Biographical Records of Harford and Cecil Counties" (1897) we read that the Captain had purchased a farm in Harford County in 1840 and made it his Summer home until 1857. Then he retired from the Sea and located permanently in the country. It was there that his children were born; George William in 1841; Isabel in 1843 and Henry Clay in 1845.

My grandmother refused to name my father after his father. She said "I shall name him after a great man." So she named him Henry Clay McComas and to make it clear that he was so named she called him "Clay"; and, of course, that name stuck to him throughout his life.

This existence between a farm house in the country and a city home in the Winter could have been very enjoyable. Those changes of address in the city would seem to mean some trouble somewhere. From the letters and from the stories

that have come down to us; trouble undoubtedly derived from the Captain. He was not on hand to look after his family and he did not send them enough money to get along. In 1849 occurred the great Gold Rush to California. Evidently the Captain wanted to improve his finances and was thinking about a voyage to San Francisco around the Horn in 1849, when his wife declared she would not follow him out there. Three years later he did make the trip.

At least 20 ships left Baltimore in one year loaded with provisions, or men, going to the Gold Fields. I understand the Captain sold some of his property and put it into a little ship. The "Record" from which we just quoted states that this little vessel was a hundred ton ship and named the "George Washington". "This is the smallest vessel that ever rounded the Horn and the feat was considered a very daring one." She was laden with the sort of things that the miners might need. According to my Uncle there was a group of men interested in this enterprise. The ship was not very sea-worthy, and these men put as much insurance on the vessel and the cargo that they could obtain. According to my Uncle they were betting that the little ship would not make the trip and they would get their profit from the insurance.

If we were to rely upon a few sentences which the old Captain used to describe his trip we should have no adequate idea of what that trip was. In order to get some notions of just what happened I have searched the Baltimore library

for books describing voyages around Cape Horn. One very readable book "Two Years before the Mast" by R. H. Dana describes one ship which made the trip in early times, "The Pilgrim" of a hundred and eighty tons burden and 86 feet long. She had two decks and two masts. She had a crew of fifteen white men mostly from New England. She had two mates, a carpenter, a steward and a cook and in addition to these there were five "seamen" and five "ordinary seamen". These were young men around 19 and 20 years of age.

The Pilgrim took a terrific beating in getting around the Horn. Contrast her crew of 15 able and trained white New Englanders with Captain Henry's 6 negroes.

I cannot find any description of a small boat going around the Horn in 1852. There is an interesting book "Around the Horn, a Journal, December 10th, 1861 to March 25th, 1862" by Edward R. Sill. Sill had just graduated from Yale and was seeking for some excitement so he shipped from New York for San Francisco. His ship was the "Sierra Nevada". She was a clipper ship of 1942 tons with a normal speed of 8 to 10 knots an hour. She was a splendid craft for her day and in a class very, very much above that of the George Washington. Yet, she had a terrific struggle getting around the Horn. I shall quote only a few entries in Sill's diary.

"Monday February 3, 1861, 4 P.M.

"Yesterday was our first day off Cape Horn. Some weather and some luck...Sea very heavy and dead set from the West. Wherefore we were some 16 miles further East at noon than

when we passed the Cape... A beautiful rainbow follows us constantly, hovering on the spray just at the stern, where the water is dashed up from the rudder.

"Tuesday February the 4th, 1861, 4 P.M. Lat.58.56 Long.71.00.

"Here we go again pitching and rolling and jerking and creeking and howling and roaring and pounding, around Cape Horn. Making a little Westing and a good deal of Southing. Wind still steady and too hard for any sails, to speak of; we are under reefed topsails, and, therefore make small progress. Sea very heavy, rolling us off of our course to the Eastward so that our wake stands off diagonally to the ship. I am about the only passenger that attempts to walk on deck now. I can only take my little stagger in half hour doses. I am in full Winter rig for the wind comes off the ice-bergs, with gloves and muffler, and an old fur hat turned down over my eyes and making a great hairy eyebrow just over my eyelids. I totter and stamp and stagger and am jerked and tilted and spilt, from the companionway to the taffrail and back, catching spasmodically at the spanker, or making frantic rushes at the booby-hatch, or bringing up with a crash on the ventilator...Once yesterday after a successful struggle to the rail, I saw a huge wave come tumbling and toppling up to windward, I saw Mr. Shears dodging around behind the ventilator, I was on the point of grinning at his horrified face, when it lifted us. I had just time to grasp the spanker sheet over my head with one hand, and in a twinkling was lying out in the air in a horizontal position, feeling wildly for the deck with my flying feet. It makes quite a little excursion from

one end of the poop to the other (some 8 or 10 paces). You start out with a steadying push at the stair door, and for the first two steps you have a level floor under your feet, then down goes the deck on your left hand and up on your right, then suddenly with a sharp jerk to one side, it rolls under you until the slant is in the opposite direction... it is like balancing on the side of a fearfully steep barn roof whose shingles are so slippery with spray that you go sliding down feet foremost.

"Down in the cabin one can scarcely hear himself think for the incessant squeek, creek, squeeeak, cree-ee-eak from ceilings and partitions; as the ship wrenches herself from one side to the other. There is no sitting or standing, save in secure corners or on chairs lashed to the floor."

If an ocean liner of that period was pitched and tossed by the winds and counter currents in this manner what in the world happened on the George Washington? A wave that would reach to the upper deck of the Sierra Nevada and nearly sweep two men overboard would certainly have made a very clean sweep across the deck of the smaller ship.

By the dates we learn that Mr. Sill made his trip during the Winter of 1861-62. A Winter journey around the Horn is much less stormy than a Summer trip. It was in Summer that Captain Henry made his voyage.

Another book "Fifty South To Fifty South" by W. M. Tompkins gives a picture of a small schooner, "The Wander Bird" and her trip around the Horn a few years ago. This interests us as he

had a little vessel comparable to the George Washington. It had a displacement of 138 tons, an over all length of 85 feet and a beam of 18 feet 6 inches, with a draft of nearly 11 feet. Captain Tompkins had made many long trips in sailing ships. He constantly carried in the back of his head the idea that some day he must attempt the passage around the Horn. Says he "A man who loves the Sea and ships can aspire to no more searching test than a Horn passage. It is the last word in the lexicon of sailor men. There Nature has arranged trials and tribulations so ingeniously that in the van of all synonyms for sea cruelty and hardships it is the iron bound Cape Horn".

In general the trip around the Horn is calculated from Latitude 50 South in the Altantic and 50 South in the Pacific, and the shortest possible track covers a thousand sea miles of ocean.

"Easterly and Northerly winds prevail in the Winter, off the Coast, whilst Southerly and Westerly winds are constant in Summer months and not only are the winds more favorable in Winter but they are moderate in comparison with the fury of the Summer gales."

To get some idea of Captain Tompkin's trip around the Horn let us read several entries from his log-book.

"Sunday November 22nd. It is the same old story. Calm at midnight again, but this time the big sea has no intention of smoothing out... These vast rollers near omnipotence. In just such a sea the German barque "Pinnas" rolled her four masts

over the side not fifty miles from this spot...If this sort of thing continues we shall have to repair the mainsail... West of the Cape we may be, but a day's labor has put us only three miles closer to Fifty, and the next gale may spew us back into the Atlantic.

"Tuesday November 24th. There is no more sewing on the mainsail, to-day. The weather grows steadily worse and there is a gale by noon, when computation put us only 20 miles nearer Fifty than we were yesterday. Current has cost us fifty miles in the last 24 hours.

"Wednesday November 25th. This wind. It teases, bedevils and taunts us and we rage impotently. We are headed on every tack. Throughout the midwatch we jump up and down in a sickening sea, the sails are slatting and banging until it is a wonder they hold together.

"In a brief evening clear observation of several stars we find that we are well South of 50. The current here has cost us 48 miles these last 36 hours."

Captain Tompkins expresses the distress that so many navigators in sailing ships have expressed about the tricky winds and currents around the Horn. One navigator plotted his course and found that his track had twisted and turned so many times that he had covered some 2400 miles instead of the theoretical 1000.

Remember that Captain Tompkins had an ample crew of experienced young men who knew all the tricks of the sailors'

trade. When a gale ripped his mainsail these young men had room enough on their craft to haul it down, haul up a substitute and in despite of the cold, sew up the long rip. I cannot see how Captain Henry could have met such an emergency. Then too "The Wander Bird" had enough men in her crew to serve the ship while their companions were getting rested for their turn. Captain Henry had only six negroes and the hardships were so terrible that two of these died at sea. We must envisage this stocky man, about five feet four tall with a chest like a barrel managing the navigating, directing and helping his crew by day and by night. We note that at one time the going was so bad that he had some thoughts of turning back. We also note that he didn't do it.

In emphasizing the daring and the determination of the Captain we may overlook another quality that he certainly had, an alert intelligence. A friend of mine who has done some exploring in the Jungles of Yucatan says, that if you want to get into trouble, a lot of trouble and bad trouble, just fail to plan for every detail in anticipation of the trip.

To prepare a ship for a trip around the Horn of course called for experience, but it also called for a lot of minute details in anticipation of all sorts of eventualities. First of all, the food supplies had to be carefully selected both as to quantity and quality. Then the character of the cargo and the prices for its purchase and sale had to be determined. In this connection the capacity of the hold and the arrangement of the cargo to prevent it from "shucking" on rough seas were

factors that had to be carefully considered. What condition the hull of the ship was in; and, also, all of the rigging were matters that demanded very close inspection and could only be understood by an experienced mariner.

Though we willingly concede the necessity for good judgment and experience in this enterprise, I think that nearly everyone finds his admiration based on something else. Consider some of the features of that voyage. On the Fourth of July the salt water had frozen to a depth of two feet on the deck. Ice must have been thick in the rigging. How a sail could be raised, lowered or reefed is a mystery. This condition persisted for two months when the wind from Westward kept beating them back. That means they had to tack against a head wind and the sails had to be adjusted to the ship's course. That this could have been done with only one man on deck is a most remarkable achievement. From the quotations that we have just read taken from the log books of other ships we may imagine those mountainous seas that kept sweeping over this little bark. Never on an even keel, she was either climbing those great seas or coasting down them rocking from side to side. That is a situation which is appalling enough in itself. Add to it the fact that it was daylight for about two hours out of the twenty four. Those enormous waves, crested with seething spray were seen, in all their menace in a darkness of the night.

Apart from the physical suffering and mental strain the Captain had to put up with an absence of social life with men

of his own type. It hardly seems possible that he could have gotten much inspiration out of the negroes that formed his crew. There is no reason to think that they were slaves, but we must remember that the voyage took place a number of years before the negroes obtained their freedom. When the Captain was worn out through fatigue and had those disturbing thoughts which arise, when enduring besetting dangers for a long time, there was no one to whom he could turn to share his thoughts and feelings. Probably his quarters were like those commonly found on sailing ships of that size. That means that they were very small and lacking in all sorts of comforts. Undoubtedly they were impregnated with the odors of the ship. The noises of the creaking timbers and the terrific wind in the rigging resounded in that little cubicle. The faint light from the swaying and smoking lamp did not permit much reading. That would have been a luxury. It must have been impossible to a man whose crew was reduced to four negroes and who was battling head winds for two months.

It is nothing short of outrageous that our family did not get a long description of the Captain's voyage. In it were materials that would make an epic. How he returned from California, by land across the continent, or by sea and that hazardous trip across the Panama Canal, we have no idea. That is a shame. Either trip as we know from records of those days would have to be full of strange experiences, exciting adventures and some description of the country and the conditions of that romantic period.

All that we have is this letter written from Valparaiso as his little ship had at last quit her violent rolling and plunging and was steady enough to write a letter:-

Valparaiso Sept. 1st, 1852.

Dear Kate

We arrived here yesterday after one of the most tedious and severe passages that I have ever seen, being 150 days from Cape Henry to this place. We had a fine passage as far South as Rio after which we had the most severe weather I ever saw, being off Cape Horn in Winter 70 days 60 of which was blowing gales of wind from Westward. Our crew disabled from frost bitten and others gave out from the severity of the weather and cold. We have all been more or less the worse for wear. Our crew being black could not stand the cold weather. At times we had but one man on deck at a time and thought we should have had to put back to Rio, but we arrived here safe with two men sick two men we buried at sea and but two to navigate the vessel, which made it very hard for us. I have never seen such weather in my life as we experienced off of Cape Horn. I thought of Baltimore on July the 4th in a very heavy gale of wind with ice on deck two feet thick by salt water freezing and no crew. It was quite encouraging: but then I thought that you and the children were enjoying yourselves in the country or at all events in a milder climate which went far to relieve me, knowing that there was one that the sun shone on for 14 hours that thought of me if it did not shine on me but two, it being

almost all night which made it much worse. But enough of these things I will tell you all when I get home once more and when Cape Horn catches me again I will know it, if you receive this in two months from date answer it to San Francisco direct to me: I hope you will try and get a house as near my business as Mother's this fall I do not care where it is so it is not so far off as at present: and lay your wood and what you want in in time before it gets too late I intend this voyage to be more economical in my disbursements than formerly; and would rather pay something more rent than at present to get nearer in town; if you should want flour you can get it of Mr. Rogers Have it Charged to my Account: Oh how often I have thought of poor G. W. he was sick when I left I hope he is well I have fancied him dead and my leaving them asleep without taking a last farewell but I hope they are all well and going to school and learning very fast: you must tell them for me to be good boys until I come Home and I will give them Something Handsome little Hen must catch George in learning: or his papy will not like it and George must try not to let him catch up with him: Isabel my pet I hope she is well and going to school too I must bring her something from Cala and for yourself my dear Kate I will give you all I have in this world all my thoughts when I am away and my whole self when at home which I hope will be about next March which seems to me very long but I must put up with it: I have not been on shore yet but am going to Morrow: but as far as I can learn Mr. Lanshez is failed but I will try and get what papers to send to George

as soon as I arrive in San Francisco if I do not write again before I leave here I write tonight as there is an American Steamer here which leaves for Panama toMorrow: the Capt takes our letters there without charge and with more punctuality than the English boats that carry the mail which will not leave for three weeks: it is now late and I have been busy with getting water and coal on board and feel tired but very well. I have not felt the Rheumatism to speak of since I left. Give my love to Mother and family tell her I have made a convert to the church of Capt Hays and a Presbyterian passenger after reading the debate had to give in, (Honestly of course) Give my love to William George and family I expect George has one by this time: Father send my love to him tell Maria I am sorry I did not see her before I left but did not know She was at Home: give my love to Laura and Derich and all inquiring friends and receive my love and all I can say or do for your dear self and Believe me ever your loving and affectionate

Husband H. G. McComas

After this trip to California Captain Henry seems to have made his voyages along the Atlantic Coast though we know very little about them. There is an old log book that he kept and some of its entries are interesting. It is not a complete log book. It is a portion which was evidently torn out. Here and there we encounter some strange things to be entered into any log book; for example, a picture of a house, then the name of his son, George W. McComas, written in various sized letters, the name of Isabel, McClanahan and others.

The general appearance of the pages which have come down to us are sheets nine inches by fifteen. At the top of two adjoining sheets is written the name of the craft, where from and towards what port, then the name of the master and the date. Down each page is a column for the hours of the day and night and a column for the number of knots covered each day and a column for the number of fathoms. Then some space is left to describe the course and also for the character of the wind. The remaining part of the page, about half, is left for remarks covering a 24 hour period and also for observations of latitude and longitude.

As one pages through the remaining leaves of this old log book he finds that it is the log of the "General Pinkney" from Baltimore to points in South America. The master is James A. Hays and the date 1853. I shall select a few specimen pages to give an idea of what happened on a trip to Rio Grande in November of 1853.

Starting with Tuesday November the 22nd the brig held her course throughout the day with an East wind making from three to five knots and the observation showed that she was in latitude 29.22 N. The next day she continues her course getting up to six knots an hour, the wind still from the East and it is not latitude 29.59. That is the last observation they were able to make in eight days owing to the storm that struck them. In the log for November the 24th she averaged five knots per hour throughout the day. Her course is now East, North east and the wind is Southeast. The remarks covering the 24 hours for the day are as follows: "Throughout these 24 hours strong gales and heavy seas S.E. with squalls of wind and rain took in and made sail as occasion required, pumps carefully attended." On November the 25th her course was E.N.E. with winds S.E. for three hours. Then she shifted her course to E. by S. and held it through the day and night though the wind shifted to the South, then S. W. then N. W. then N. and finally N. E. Throughout all of this she maintained four to five knots but the next five days she struggled along at one knot per hour and she seems to be in about four fathoms of water which is recorded for five days. On the 28th of November as well as for the preceding day there are no entries for the direction of the wind and under the heading for "course" there is an entry for the beginning of the day which reads "up E. S.E. and off S. E." The remarks for this day are "All these 24 hours violent gales with heavy seas from N. E. At 2P. M. shipped a sea which stoved fly rail, unshipped a binnacle etc, having

much water on board constantly, pumps carefully attended." The remarks for the next day "All these 24 hours violent gales. Heavy seas from E. N.E. with constant squalls of rain and wind. Brig under balance, reefed trisail, T.T. staysail, pumps carefully attended." The entry for November the 30th tells how "Wore ship" twice during the day. This expression means that they changed by tacking the direction the ship was heading into the wind. All this day she was making but one knot an hour. The next day she began to pick up speed and by the end of the day was again making her five knots and on the following day December the 2nd she maintained her speed and was able to get her observation again which was latitude 30.48 N. Two days after that we get this entry "Throughout these 24 hours moderate breezes S. by W.with some rain all sails set to the best advantage, pumps carefully attended; Lat. 31.45 N." She had been maintaining eight knots an hour for two days. This remnant of a log book ends rather ignominiously. It has a few notations concerning cash received from mother, some items from the account of the Clayton farm with, one, John Gibbs in which he is paid for his labor at the rate of 50 cents a day.

As a finale one of the children wrote a composition on the last page how he or she would build a house in the country. I imagine it was a "she" for after stipulating that it should have vines, especially honeysuckles, running over the house she goes on to describe how she would prefer to be in the city during the winter. I will give her credit for wanting to have a very great library with a great "suply" of all the books that she liked in it.

What of this wife, to whom he always wrote in such endearing terms? He was surely justified in loving her as dearly as he did. Everyone who knew her loved her.

Keziah Cunningham was born in Harford County in 1812 and on that tract of land known as Littleton. She lived her entire life in Harford County and Baltimore. She never went out of her own state of Maryland. But in her wide reading and vivid imagination she had travelled the world over. George Cunningham, her father, had come from Ireland, but a number of his relatives must have been in Maryland long before that, - as we find a Cunningham who was a gunsmith before the Revolution.

According to the stories she used to tell me, when I was a boy, her childhood was full of the hardships of a pioneer life. Loving literature as she did she only had some six months of actual schooling. Home conditions must have been rather bad, for most of her brothers and sisters died early from "consumption". There could not have been much luxury in that home for my grandmother told me that the only dolls she ever had were made from corn cobs dressed up with rags.

Against this picture of early poverty we know something of the house in which she grew up as a child. It is still standing though it has been moved back from the road where it stood 140 years ago. It is a good-sized, comfortable, frame building. When it stood down at the intersection of two roads grandmother's father showed his enterprise by getting two oil lamps for his front porch. According to grandmother farmers

from all around the neighborhood would drive up almost to the house, stop, look at the queer innovations, and drive on without saying a word.

Judge W. W. Preston who wrote a history of Harford County told me as we sat on his old front porch that Henry Gough McComas, the hero of North Point, was born in this old house. I do not believe it as he had only rumor for his belief. By some means or other this Miss Cunningham educated herself. Then she got a position in a country school as a teacher. My cousin, Winona McComas, who spent her girlhood with her grandmother, has many memories of her and her stories about her early experiences. Winona has a silver spoon which her grandmother bought with the first money earned in teaching school, and this was in that little red brick school house in Franklinville. From the letters that passed between her and her husband we may draw our own inferences about her life while he was living. He died in 1858 and she lived for 40 years after that.

She made her home with her son, George William McComas, and in the old house that Daniel, son of William, had built sometime in the 1740s. In my childhood she occasionally came to Baltimore to visit the home of her other son. This she did until about 1883 when the stage-coach stopped running from Harford County. She would not ride in the train, because it was too dangerous.

When I used to visit her she was a very elderly lady. The last eleven years of her life she spent in a wheel-chair,

terribly crippled with arthritis. Even to a young man full of all sorts of interests this dear old lady was an enjoyable companion. Never a word came from her lips concerning her affliction and her pain. Quite otherwise, she kept up on current events and was a very ardent democrat. After one of William Jennings Bryan's defeats, in running for the Presidency, she wrote to him and told him to be courageous in his temporary set-back. All the family were kept in ignorance of this communication, as they had no use for Mr. Bryan. I often wondered why his photograph with his signature hung in the dining-room. It was some years before the family found out. After politics her great interest was in literature. She had a most tenacious memory and could quote poetry literally by the hour. Along with all this was a delightful Irish sense of humor.

As I think of her, after reading again these old letters, which she had cherished for half a century, the outstanding impression that I have of her is her courage. Hers was a long life, deprived of many of the things that go into the making of contentment and happiness. Many people bear their hardships with grim determination. She bore hers with no grimness at all but with a smile.

Courage, among human beings, varies in quantity and, also, in quality. Both the Captain and his wife had more than their share of the quantity of courage. Each differed from the other quite distinctly in their qualities of courage.

THE LETTERS

New Years Night 1846

My Dear Henry

Again I sit down to write to you for I have written to Providence, but I suppose you never received it as it put in the office as soon as I hardly knew you had arrived before I received your dear welcome letter. Oh I was so anxious to hear from you I almost despaired of ever hearing from you again and when I heard that you had arrived, and you did not write; I concluded you had the smallpox. You know I always have something to grieve about, I live all alone all day, Ma has gone down to Old Town all of Sarah Ann's children has the measels. Laura, Henrietta and George has gone for Hannah R wedding she is married at Mr. Kennard's Aisquith Street. Your Mother has gone to R. Jonsons to see his daughter married, she is quite stylish. I was invited to Hannah's wedding but thought I would rather be writing to you, if you were here I would be delighted to go (but this world is a wilderness without you) We are all well our children here escaped the measels so far; and I feel very thankful but I am expecting some kind of sickness every day, Henry Clay and George William both wrote to you in my other letter Clay says bring him a "pair of boots for poor Hen Clay", George W. says he wants a hammer.

They often talk about you and want to know when you are coming home; Clay says is Papa coming weekly you ought to see him he is growing so pretty; I am not very well; nor have not been since you left but I hope against you come back I may be well which I hope will be soon for I am getting

out of patience waiting to see you. you come home from Norfolk your Mother has just been here and says the owner of the vessel has been to see her to-day and says one of them wants to sell his part which $1700.50 she told him you could take it if you liked I hope you will come home from Norfolk for really it seems like a long long time since you left home. Oh Henry I am sorry enough that you can't send the macherel! but indeed you must bring me something for a Christmas gift if it be a hoe cake from old Virginia. William and Eliza have come back to Balto. and rented a house in Lexington Street. I have not seen any of them. Dick was here last night he has grown very much he was asking after you, Santy also is very anxious to hear from you every member of the family send their love to you. Dear Henry do come home while the moon shines I want to walk with you. If you can read this miserable scrawl I will be glad for the paper is bad and Clay is on the table and G. W. at my elbow. G. W. says he wishes he were me then he could write to you. I must conclude as I know nothing that will be interesting to you because I shall look for you in a week or two farewell my dear Henry take good care of yourself.

From your affectionate
Keziah

P. S. Give my best respects to Capt. Ridgeways

The above letter was addressed to Mr. Henry G. McComas, Norfolk, Virginia.

Balt. Feb. 1st 1846

My Dear Henry

It was a great deal of pleasure I received your letter; but I felt very sorry when you said you were sick I fear you are not well yet, oh if I could only see you and know how you were then I would feel satisfied: but I have bad dreams of late foreboding some evil which makes me quite low spirited: you say you fear I have forgotten where to write to, but indeed you never told me you were going to Savannah nor Elizabeth City but to Charleston from which place I expected you to write: Mr. Matthews told George he heard from you some days before I heard from you oh I'll pay you for being there eight days before you wrote me. We are all well; Betsy and Arnold has been here this evening. We have another moon now dear Hen but have no hope of taking a pleasant moon light walk with you. (at this point a half a page has been cut out of this letter) You never said a word about coming home; next time you write tell me when you think you will come we are all anxious to see you the children talk a great deal about you; Clay took your letter and would scarcely let me read he carried it in his apron and said (mine Papa sent it to Hen Tay) George W. says make haste home with his hammer; and I am a baby too bring me a venison ham too with Miss Henrietta's. If you have any money to spare you may send me some I have paid all the rent to the 9th of Feb. I will try to get a cheaper house against that time for it

takes so much to pay rent. Well no more about family affairs, I am not done scolding you! You did not say how the weather was in Savannah we have had real winter here good slieghing I never saw so many sleighs in my life I wished I could go if you could be with me. I have finished one quarter at school and two weeks in the next quarter make haste Hen and make money enough to keep me from that tiresome employment I would rather nurse children than teach them. I shall have to conclude as you see my paper is scarce and it is the Sabbath or I could have had a whole sheet give my respects to Capt R tell him he ought to have heard old brother Furgurson this I never was more pleased with a sermon: excuse this miserable scrawl write as soon as possible. Farewell my dearest Henry

Your affectionate

Kate

The above letter was addressed to Mr. Henry G. McComas Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Savannah April 26th 1846

My Dear Kate

I have been here now 11 days and to the post office every mail since I came expecting to hearing something from my dear wife and boys but have been Disappointed. My dear Kate you must excuse me for not writing before as I have not had time for I came away without a mate and have been so closely confined to hard work through the day at night I could not write having the accounts of the cargo to make out. We have sold our corn

at 75 cts in from 3 bush to 500 which made it tedious and also tiresome I have a freight engaged for Balto and expect to sail about Wednesday tell George Cunningham to tell Edward I have bought about 12000 feet yellow pine flooring if he wants any I will sell them cheaper than he can get the same any where else. Dear Kate I have nothing to say to interest you and I feel somewhat sleepy. I have just come from church and have a very hard days work before me tomorrow. Give my best love to every person I know. I have not time to mention names and take ten times as much as you can give away for your dear self and children. Kiss them both for me in about a week after you receive this you may expect your own Hen with you. Farewell my Dear wife I remain your Aff Husband

Henry McComas

The above letter is addressed to Mrs. K. A. McComas, corner of Pine and Balto Streets, Balto Md.

Savannah Aug 31st 1846

My dear Kate

I have been here nine days without writing to you who with our Dear Children are all in the world I have to think of. I should have written on my arrival here but in waiting a few days to learn what to do or where to go I have put it off until this time. the freight I expected to get from Darian I could not get on account of the owner being North. I did expect to go to New Orleans until yesterday but now have concluded to come home with what little freight I can get.

I have been sick for four days with the fever and was not on board for that time during which time our corn was sold at 75 cts and oats at 45 which is a very handsome freight but it was discharged with double the expense as if I could attended to it myself. Well enough of business matters. I am now very well and hope these few lines will find you in the same health. I received your Dear letter on Sunday and you may conceive how delighted I was to hear from you and our dear children and to hear you were well. Poor dear little Clay I am very sorry he is not well but take you care of him as well as yourself and G. W. and little Bell how I do long to see you all. it has seemed longer to me this time than ever we have been separated Kiss our dear children for me and tell them I will soon be home and bring them something pritty. tell Derrick we will have a trip to Harford when I come home but you must be in the party for without you are with me I cannot enjoy myself as I would wish. Give my love to Mother and family Miss Henrietta W. and E. and all inquiring friends. I expect to sail on Thursday the 3rd Sep I have three passengers but very little freight engaged just enough for Ballast. Excuse this jumbled up medley of our affairs for I cannot talk on paper. Farewell my dear Kate until I get home and believe me ever your Dear and Affectionate husband

Henry G. McComas

The above letter was addressed to Mrs. K. A. McComas, corner Pine and Baltimore Streets, Baltimore, Maryland.

New York May 17th 1849

My Dear Wife

It is very hurtful to me to be kept here so long without receiving any news from home. I have been here two weeks and wrote you the first night I arrived, and have been anxiously expecting to hear, but nothing from anyone, it has made me very low spirited for I do not know how you have been getting along or whether you have received my from London and an order from Mr. Buck or if you have got any money from him in my last from New York. I wrote you about it. I have some clothes for the boys and a piece of silk for Bell which I will send the first opportunity. The Bark is going back to Antwerp so it will be about four months before I get home. If I do not get an answer to this I will not write again until I return to Balto, I have been waiting so long to hear from you that I am quite sick. I almost think that the only ones dear to me has entirely forgotten that I am alive. If anything is wrong let me know at once and do not keep me in suspense but let me know give my love to every person that thinks enough of me to inquire Kiss our dear children for me and believe me ever your dear and affectionate husband

H. G. McComas

New York May 21st 1849

Dear Kate

I received your letter first written together with Miss Henrietta's. It was mailed at the Magnolia, where I expect it was delayed for I had been and sent to the post office every day expecting it. On Saturday it was advertised I then late Saturday received it. Yesterday I spent most of the day with Beale Cockey dined with him tell Miss Henrietta they are all well her Niece will write this week Beale says he will be in Baltimore as soon as his business will permit it but will not appoint any time he is anxious you should come to N York and stay while I am here and I should like it very much for you to come if Miss Henrietta could come with you, but it is so uncertain when we will leave it is hardly worth while thinking of it. We may be here three weeks and may not be here six days. I have made an engagement to visit Mr. Cockey next Sunday if we are here and to bring his daughter down to the Bark they all send their love to you, Miss Mary and Edward's family. After my visit next Sunday I will write you a long letter and give you some information of the scenes in New York. Mother said in her small note when she heard of the riot she expected to see my name among the killed and wounded I was not within two miles of the place my vessel is the only home I have when away from home I know person in New York except two or three captains and mates of vessels. Richard is well but will not come to Baltimore until the Bark comes home it was his choice to go to sea let him abide by the hardships of the life which he has found to be much harder than either

carpentering or farming when we come to Balto Mother can do as she will with him, I sent today the things by Adams Express the freight they would not receive here I directed it to Mother they will pay the freight 50 cents you can pay them, enclosed I send the receipt for the bundle, also an order on Mr. Buck for $15 per month and $25 cash which I hope will help you very much. You must write to me as often as you can every day is not too often to hear from you my dear Kate tell me something on paper if we cannot be together the paper and postage is nothing to the gratification of hearing from you and seeing your dear hand writing it seems as if you were here now I have your three letters before me on the table not a soul on board but myself and ten o'clock at night. if you do not like the cloth for the boys you can let George have it for a coat if he likes it and get something more suitable for the boys it cost in London $2.25 per yard I got a frock coat pantaloons of the same there was three yards of it but I had a vest made on the passage here by one of the passengers which I thought would make me a good Winter vest and the making cost nothing. Write to me as soon as you receive this and let me know if you have got the things those baskets you can do as you please with but I intended them for Mrs. Henrietta and the mats for you or at least all for you to do as you please with tell me how your coffee and sugar holds out for I expect it is gone, Kiss all the children for me tell Belle when I come home I will bring her beads

Tell G. W. to be a good boy I will bring him a canary bird from Antwerp, tell Clay if he dont grow faster get bigger I won't give him his watch when I get home. I wonder what has become of Laura Maria George and all the family none of them seems to say anything in either of your letters I must close dear Kate as it is now ten O'clock I am tired and alone and must go to bed I wish you could share it with me

Yours until death H. G. McComas

New York June 7th 1849

Dear Kate

I have received all your dear welcome letters and was glad to hear you were all well but am very sorry to hear your Ma is poorly, you must tell Susan I will not forget her when I come from Antwerp for I have not forgotten her nor ever will for her kindness to you and the children if I did I should be very ungrateful. I should have written before but I wanted to know when we should leave before I wrote You must write as soon as you receive this and send that large chart by Adams Express as we sail on Monday or Tuesday. I am at present very well but there are a great many cases of chlorea here and on the increase for the weather has been very warm these few days past and I had much rather be at sea if I cannot be at home. I have nothing new to say and must close as I must mail it tonight. Capt. M is not on board or I would send a special order in this but he wrote to Mr. Buck and I will send it in my next. Give my

love to all my friends I will write L tomorrow Kiss the children for me and believe me your affectionate husband

H. G. McComas

Baltimore Sunday 11th of June 1849

My Own Dearest Henry

What is the reason you have not written? I fear you are sick! I have deferred writing for a week, expecting a letter every day; but to my great disappointment have received none. You certainly have received my letters before this I am so affraid you are sick I have written twice to you since you wrote me I would have written last week but waited every day for one from you I can wait no longer; I am going this afternoon (if it does not rain) to see Mrs. Martin perhaps she can give me some consolation concerning you; Oh I have such a dread of the cholrea do my dear Henry take care of yourself I dreamed of you last night and the night before which I thought was a presage of my getting a letter from you.

Your Mother was here last night she wants to write to you with me but as you are opposed to double letters I will send hers separate. I have not got it yet she says she is affraid you will sail before you get it but I hope not, for I should be very unhappy if I thought you would not get my farewell letters which this will be if you leave soon. We are all well, Isabel still sings her Papa's song, "Carry Me Back To Old Virginney" she says that is her dear Papa's. It is quite healthy in Balt. for ought I know, which I hope may continue so for I long to see the time you will come

today I feel as if I could cry myself sick. I suppose it is because I feel as if this is the last letter I shall write to you 'till I see you which is so long, four months yet to wait. I hope this is the last voyage you will make in the Kirkwood if you don't come to Balt. for I think it is too hard for you to stay by that vessel all the time and never get to see your friends. I hope you may not always be so situated fortune may yet smile on us. If I was able you should never leave home without me again if you are master of a vessel again I am going with you anywhere you may go except to California I will take Bell with me and leave the two boys home, I know it would improve my health very much - you promised to write me a description of New York which you have not done yet, tho' you did fill your last letter it was not written so close or small as I write, you might have added your description if you had made your letters smaller, however it was your own dear writing which I love as well as the words; those letters which I have received from you, since your arrival; are a great comfort to me, I cherish them as all the comfort I can receive from you Laura, Maria, Emily, and Dearich are all in the country; they are all well. George received your letter and showed it me why did you not write me then, dear Henry if you know how little pleasure I take in anything except what relates to you you would always be willing to write at any time "When thou art with me naught can harm me
Thou cans't every pang asuage
When thou art absent naught can charm me
Every moment seems an age"

It is nearly twelve o'clock and I must attend to family affairs (how I wish you were here) all the family send their love to you George W. and Henry Clay and Isabel send their love to their dear Papa and I too dear Hen send all I possess to you wishing that every blessing attend you in all your dangers and troubles while absent from her who lives only for you

Farewell my dearest Henry

From your affectionate Kate

Remember me to Richard

New York June 15th 1849

My dear Kate

I received your last letter on Tuesday and Mother's on Wednesday and I was glad to hear you were all well and Mother had learned to write a little more respectable I should have answered your letter before but for want of time and something to say for I have been very busy taking in cargo and have just finished and hauled in east river to sail as soon as the wind and tide will permit which I expect will be this afternoon or tomorrow. I expected an answer from the last one I wrote before this as I expected to hear once more from my dear Wife and Children Who it would not be worth living in this world if it were not for them Capt. Martin says he has wrote to Mr. Buck to pay you $15 per month after the first July which I hope you will receive. for it does me more good to hear from you and hear you are in good spirits than anything in this world. All I dislike I am affraid we

shall have to come to N York again. You must write to Antwerp in two or three weeks it would do me so much good to hear from you on the other side of the water, direct your letter to Mr. Serizier, Anvers, Belgia, there has been a great many cases of cholrea in N Y the last few days for the number of Irish dens and dirty streets with a low sultry warm atmosphere the past week it cannot but help but be sickly whether it be cholrea or not. I am at present very well and for fear of being taking sick after going to sea I have six bottles of sarsaparilla, I have nothing new to write. tell Miss H her brothers family were well on Sunday and send their love to all their friends. You must take good care of yourself and the children this summer and do not teach school in the heat of it I want you to look pretty when I come home for you do not think how hard it goes with me this time leaving without seeing you. If the Bark gets to the United States and does not go home I will leave her to her fate and come myself. for I am tired of being away from the only ones dear to me in this life. Tell Bell she shall have her Beads and everything else when I come home. I will bring the boys something if they are good boys to their mother. Kiss them all for me as often as you can as their Papa cannot be there to do it himself. I must close as we sail in an hour and want to write to Mother before we sail so as to send them to the post office. Farewell my dear Kate and Children and may heaven protect you until I return is the prayer of

Your affectionate husband

H. G. McComas

Upon the last sheet of this letter to his wife we find the following: -

New York June 15th 1849

Mr. B. Buck and Sons

Will please pay or order the sum of $15 per month after the first of July and charge the same to the account of the Bark Kirkwood

H. G. McComas

for Capt. O. R. Martin

P. S. if Capt. Martin has not written to Mr. Buck as he promised drop a line to Capt. Martin Seaford Delaware which will be all the same

Your aff Henry

The next letter which we have comes from much later in the year 1849, which would lead us to think that he had a successful trip to Antwerp and had then started on an another voyage.

Cape Henry Dec. 4th 1849

Dear Kate

I am now about to take farewell of the land this side of the U S and also from the only ones in the world that is dear to me, my wife and children I had a very heavy gale on Saturday night and Sunday morning when I got in Hampton Rhodes. about ten o'clock and have laid here since. I am quite well and hope you and the children are all well I like the Schr. very much she is a first rate little vessel I am now ahead of the Uncas about five miles and expect to keep

her so to Rio and beat her 15 to 20 days I hope you have seen my Daugerotype which you must excuse for the hurry it was taken in and the rig I had on at the time which was quite slovenly. excuse this short letter but I will write you all the passage at Rio. if you know a vessel sailing for Rio Write to me there kiss the children for me and take good care of yourself my dearest Kate. Your affectionate Husband

These letters written in 1849 were addressed by the Captain to his wife at 476 Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

The one letter we have from her to him is addressed as follows"for Henry G. McComas, Barque Kirkwood, to the care of E. D.Hurlburt and Company, 84 South Street, New York. In haste".

THE END OF AN ERA

The sons and daughter of the old Sea Captain lived during the end of an era and saw the beginning of a new one. Really it seems like something taken from a work of fiction; when we consider the span of years during which members of the McComas family dwelt in that old house in Gresham's Colledge, on the high hill that shelved away to Winter's Run. It was in 1729 when Daniel McComas acquired a part of this tract and it was 1928 when George William McComas passed away in the old house. There he had lived for 75 years. A few years after he had passed away a faulty electric wire (a product of the New Era) burned the old house to the ground. Not knowing this, I turned into the old place one Fall day and when I topped the hill and looked for the old home, there was nothing standing but two gaunt grey chimneys with their gaping Colonial fire-places.

The old Era had gone. There was no place for the house that Daniel built in the pioneer days in the New Era.

When the children of Captain Henry were growing up their home was an isolated place, far from the interests and activities of the growing Nation. During the winter months, it was an undertaking to get to the post office and pick up what letters and papers had accumulated since the last visit. Now such a home as that at Linwood is in the midst of a swiftly moving civilization. With rural free delivery, radio and television people living there are in the center of the world's activities. The fields that George and Clay tilled behind a

plow are now cultivated with modern machinery. It was an undertaking for one day to get from Gresham's Colledge to Baltimore. I stood on the site of the old house last Summer. I was thinking of my grandmother driving from her home to wait near the blacksmith shop to take the stage coach to Baltimore. Just then an airplane travelling at some 300 miles an hour soared through the sky. In a matter of minutes it would be over Baltimore. From Aberdeen's Proving Grounds came the rumble of a great gun being tested. I could not help comparing the coming Atomic Age with the age which is so quickly fading away.

On that afternoon there was a slight breeze from the east and the rather musical murmur of Winter's Run drifted up to the crest of the hill. I chanced to think of a few lines of a poem dedicated to a stream. All I could remember was, "men may come and men may go but I go on forever".

It takes a good deal of resiliency in human nature to adapt ones self to two very different sorts of eras. This was a task imposed upon the children of the old Captain, and they seemed to take it in their stride.

George William McComas (1841-1928) stayed on those rolling acres of Gresham's Colledge throughout his life. As a boy he tilled those same fields in the same manner as his forefathers. However, he had the ingenuity to keep abreast of his times. He built, and conducted for many years, a large cannery near Winter's Run. He showed his ingenuity by harnessing the Run to a generator and lighting up the old house with electricity. As soon as radio appeared he installed a set and kept abreast of the times.

My recollections of him give an impression of a man who had lived close to nature all of his life, and who viewed the world and its confusions in a clear and honest way. He always kept well informed and had his own carefully thought out opinions. These characteristics, undoubtedly, appealed to the men in his part of Harford County for they elected him to the State Senate. One term, there, was enough for him. He remarked to me afterwards that he had always known that politics were corrupt, but he had never imagined anything like what he found at Annapolis. He remarked that he did not fit in very well. Frequently, he was approached by gentlemen who would say "Well, now, what do you want?" He would reply "I don't want anything." That always seemed to introduce a sort of anti-climax.

Of course, it may be simply my imagination but I formed a habit of thinking of him as a representative of those sturdy forebears, who had lived in his sort of environment. That idea has lead me to think of them as being men who enjoyed a good conversation, men who could listen, and who could talk modestly; but who always saw the amusing phase in almost any subject. Quiet men, strong men with an affectionate strain running through their nature, which showed itself only in what they did.

In the year 1874 he married Virginia Ellen Norris who was born in 1851. She belonged to a family that ran back into pioneer days. Here is an item from an old Land Record

My recollections of the [illegible] acquaintance of a man who had lived close to Nature all of his life, and had viewed the world and its conditions in a broad and honest way, the effect upon this informed and jolly man [illegible] thoughts and opinions. Some of these, naturally, were [illegible] to the man in all parts of [illegible] County, for they [illegible] him to the [illegible] Meeting. One time, [illegible], the [illegible] this man, in [illegible] of the [illegible] that he [illegible] politics were [illegible], to the [illegible] at Annapolis. [illegible] not [illegible]. [illegible], he was [illegible] gentleman who would say "[illegible]?" He would reply "I can't very well [illegible]." [illegible] to introduce a [illegible] of [illegible].

Of course, it will be seen by [illegible] that I formed a habit of thinking of [illegible] and [illegible] lived in [illegible]. [illegible] enjoyed a good conversation, [illegible], and who would talk [illegible]; but [illegible] in almost any subject. [illegible] itself only in [illegible].

In the [illegible] was born in 1877. [illegible]

"John Norris purchased May 5th 1724 from Alexander Maccomas carpenter and Elizabeth his wife for 3000 pounds of tobacco, land called 'Macedon', lying in Baltimore County at the head of the Bush River". Throughout the early Land Records and Church Records one constantly encounters this name. It was one of the largest and most prominent families in Harford County.

Aunt "Jenny" was known to her nieces and nephews as one of those great-hearted women who are always doing things to make children fond of her. After they both died an old friend of theirs said to me "I don't know any wife who meant more to a man than she did to George."

Their children, the last McComases to be born in the old house, were Henry Gough, September the 6th 1875; Cardiff Norris May 25th 1877; George William March 8th 1879; and Mary Winnona July 9th 1887.

The "Little Bell", the darling of the old Captain, married Joseph Turner who was not a "house-carpenter", but a contractor, who built many buildings. He built rows of houses in Baltimore. It is interesting to note that the name "Guilford Avenue" was supplied by him after he had built a number of houses on that street. He named it after a Miss Guilford who was nursing at his home at that time. The family moved to New York while I was a boy and I saw her but once during her life. Evidently during the many years she lived in the stirring scenes of New York City her thoughts often turned back to the green roll-

ing hills of Gresham's College for she insisted upon being buried by her mother and the old Captain in the ground that her grandparents had given to the Mountain Church.

The younger son "Little Clay", in the old letters, was my father. When his grandfather William bought the farm on Gresham's College in 1853 my father was 8 years old. There he lived for 10 years, went to old Mr. Curtis' school with his brother, and worked very hard on the farm. Many times during his life he has spoken of the hardships that he and his brother had to endure. However, there must have been many things he enjoyed about it, for he would occasionally speak of some incident that he had thoroughly enjoyed. During all the years he lived in the city he never lost his love of the country and for dogs and horses. Shortly before he died he remarked to me "One thing I have enjoyed all my life is to see things grow."

Apparently a crisis came in his life in the blazing sunshine of a hot summer's day out in the fields. It may have been the culmination of resentment toward many years of hard work. At all events he suffered from nose-bleed in the heat, and on this particular day he decided it was not to be borne any longer. He went up to the old house and told his Mother that he was going down to the City and get a job.

This was during the exciting years of the Civil War, 1863, and he was not yet 18 years of age. He once showed me a brick stable back of a house on Eager Street where he and a

number of other boys had collected some arms for the Confederate Army. They all hoped to slip off and enlist with the Confederates. Somehow or other this scheme went "agleg". Two years later the Union Army was after him and they had to mortgage the farm to obtain a substitute. Surely, it would have been a bitter pill if your sympathies were enlisted with the Confederates and you had to serve in the opposing Army.

Father never boasted, but he did point out with pride that after he had come to Baltimore he worked his way through Bryant and Stratton's Business course in the shortest possible time, with only a country boy's education back of him. How he got the money to pay for the course isn't clear; for he once told me that, when he came to Baltimore, all he owned in the world was the shirt on his back and it had a rip in it. Possibly his Uncle William M. McComas staked him for it seems that this uncle started him in the tobacco business, perhaps in the old building at 502 Baltimore Street, where William had started a tobacco warehouse.

Something evidently happened about this time. According to tradition the country boy was making too much money in the tobacco game and was having too good a time. He was turned over to another relative, a Mr. Washburn, who was in the coal business on the corner of Lee and Light Streets. Heaven knows, he could not have made much money in that, or had too gay a time. In addition to this he had to live in old Mr. Washburn's house on Charles Street near Eager.

However, there were some young Washburns living here and I imagine they managed to have some rather exciting times. Perhaps I should not divulge the source of my information, but as it comes from such a remote date, nearly 100 years ago it can do no harm. As a boy, rummaging in an old desk I came across the love letters that my father had written to my mother. In them was some rather indifferent poetry, and then a declaration that she had just about saved him. She had gotten him to abandon all of his bad habits. That would imply that the young man was becoming too friendly with John Barlycorn. Though he may have broken off the friendship, he still retained an acquaintanceship. All of his life he drank moderately. Here is a tip he gave an old pal of his, I met a few years ago, "If you do happen to drink a bit too much and you feel a little confused; cut a lemon and squeeze a little of the juice in your nose. That will clear you up."

The home of the Washburns was about a block and a half from the tall, red, brick building, at the top of the hill on Charles Street, and Chase; where Oliver A.Parker lived. His elder daughter Mary was a tall, graceful girl with dark blue eyes and a love of fun. Clay saw her and was very much attracted. By some means he obtained an introduction. At his 40th wedding anniversary he said "You ought to have given me an opportunity to tell how I used to carry her books to school for her." After she finished school, when she was

However, [illegible] and a [illegible]

The [illegible]

about 18 years of age she was married in the house on the corner of Charles and Chase Street. There they lived until 1875 when he rented his own house on the corner of what is now Charles and Mt. Royal Avenue. At about this time in his life my recollections of him begin. Toward me he always had an affectionate and joking attitude. He called me "Billy" but I have no idea why. Evidently, he was full of enthusiasms; for he brought two setter dogs home in the hope that they could live in a yard of 18 by 20 feet. Nothing discouraged by that failure, he tried to keep a gorgeous peacock in that little yard. There comes a gap in my recollection and then I find some incidents that are connected with the house he lived in several years later. One of these is the way he used to laugh at me when I would break the splints old Dr. Murdoch used to bind on my foot to set a broken bone. Another, I would always be waiting for him to eat breakfast, before the rest of the family came down. I would sit in a high chair, knees braced on the table, balancing on its back legs. Occasionally, I would start going over backwards. He would grab me, but he never got mad. On Sundays he would pour champagne into his glass from a bottle that had a little bell tied on with a ribbon. It required a diplomacy to deal those bells out to the three children.

The next home he had was on Calvert street just above Read. Between this house and his office on Lee and Light street he used to drive in a buggy with a patient sorrel

mare named "Lucy". In fact he rode all over the city in this outfit in connection with his coal business. He used to leave home at about eight thirty in the morning, return for dinner at three P. M., and leave the office about half past six allowing time for supper at seven thirty P. M. My recollections of him during this period would indicate that he was a man with a great deal of energy and who was enjoying life. He loved to go hunting every fall. He and mother would slip off for a week in New York. He had a billiard table installed on the third floor, and had a great many friends. When my sister was born in 1887 he took me in the parlor and said that he had something to tell me. Then he said he was going to give me a little baby sister and, then, asked me if I was happy about that. I replied that it was all right, but I would rather have a double-barrel shotgun. I can still see him laughing over that one. In 1892 he moved into quite a handsome house at 1019 North Charles Street. For some reason, or other, his life there does not seem to be anything like as happy as in the years before. Why, I do not know. By this time he had built up his coal business into the largest in the city, and he was a director in his father-in-law's firm. This slow change came about, in his attitude toward life, not through financial conditions but, probably, through another source of worries. About this time his youngest daughter was afflicted with infantile paralysis. And there were anxious years in which he watched the physicians do all that they could for her. Then at about this time his eldest son was enjoying too close

a friendship with John Barleycorn. Escapades occurred that worried him deeply. In fact he admitted to me when his health began to give way some six years before he died, that his ill health was due to worrying.

It was back in 1871 when his father-in-law loaned him $5,000 to go in business for himself. He moved across the street from Washburn's Coal Company and acquired a little brick building that ran for about 15 feet on Light Street and about 20 on Lee Street; beside, and behind it, were stables for horses and carts. The pleasantest recollection I have of this noisy and dusty little office is the picture of my father shooting at rats, running around the manure piles, with a cat-and-rat rifle. All sorts of people filed into that little office. South Baltimore was the toughest part of the city in those years, and just about all of South Baltimore bought its coal in that little office. Evidently it was a business that thrived, for in later years whan he built a very much larger building, on the same spot, he remarked that they had done more business in the old brick office.

In a way, history repeated itself. William had come to Baltimore in 1808 a poor country boy and had slowly built up a good sized fortune by hard work, refraining from speculation. Clay was equally poor when he came to Baltimore and made a much larger fortune and, also, stuck to the same business throughout his life time. But he did speculate. I definitely

remember, when I was about 8 years old, a broker coming to our home and shutting himself up in a room with my father. Later I learned that a strange thing called "the market" had gone against my father and he had lost some money. Many years later, when I was doing a little speculating myself, I asked him about the incident. He remembered it very well and said that he had lost several thousand dollars he had invested in Railway shares. Then he laughed and said that he had gotten it all back in exactly those same railroads. When he died he was holding 200 shares of B. & O. pfd. on margin.

Funny thing about speculation, father thought there was something wrong about "selling short", taking up "puts and calls" or "buying a straddle". This I never could see, consequently a number of arguments. Ten years after my father died I undertook to run the coal business. Then I had an opportunity to see him as his old customers had known him and, also, as the older dealers, in the coal business, remembered him. With these people he had done business over a period of years. Every one of them went out of their way to tell me that there were certain things about him that they definitely liked, he always kept his word and was scrupulously honest. Some of his competitors were not fond of him, but they would admit that in the occasional fights he fought fair.

And what of the romance that sprang up between the clerk and the school girl? Clay's letters to his sweetheart, that I read as a boy, had even more affection in them than those of

the old Sea Captain. Here, too, was a devotion that lasted from courtship throughout all the years. As a child, an adolescent and a man I had an infinite number of opportunities to observe. In 40 years I cannot remember one instance when either one of them spoke to the other in anger. Whenever he left the dinner table, no matter how worried he had been, or how quiet he had remained throughout the meal, he always came around the table and kissed her good-bye before going back to work.

About my mother, I do not know how to write. There are no outstanding incidents, or activities, during her long life that could be mentioned as having sone unique interest. From the earliest years of my life to that dread hour, just before she died, her life was all of one pattern. If one word could describe it it would be "unselfishness". Indeed for so many years she had developed a habit of thinking what another person's interests might be, rather than her own, that it took quite a little ingenuity to find out what she, herself, really wished. One trait she did possess to an uncanny degree, insight into a person's character. On several occasions I persisted in my understanding of certain individuals telling her that I was using my psychology. She would smile, in her gentle way, and say "I think you are wrong". I was. I do not think that I am equipped to give anything like a true picture of my mother as an individual among individuals. My admiration for her and my love is so deep that I can only see her as she appeared to me.

THE EIGHTH GENERATION

With this chapter we run into an entirely new situation. Hitherto we have been concerned with members of the family who had lived their lives and passed on. With this eighth generation of McComases we find that a great many of them are very much alive. That presents an embarrassment for me, as it is my intention to present them with this "Saga of the McComas Clan".

At this point, in this compilation of the various items I have been able to find about the various McComases, we are going to have a departure from my way of doing things. As each one of you, in this generation, will have this loose-leafed "Saga" you can easily fill out some pages about yourself and about those members of the family nearest to you, and insert them in your copy of the "Saga".

All the time that I have been collecting this material I have been thinking of you, and your children that come after you, and then of the children that shall come along in the years that follow.

It has been my hope, throughout, that these accounts of our Forebears will awaken your interest and that you may feel a desire to have your life appear as a link between those who have gone before and those that shall come after.

For many years the members of our, and other families used to keep a record in their family Bibles of the immediate family. You will recall the old House Bible that the Four Brothers had. Unhappily this old custom has about faded out.

It is my hope that your "Saga" may take the place of those pages in the old Bibles that were headed with the words "Family Record".

Of course, I know that your own life does not seem particularly interesting to you, but remember this. When a hundred years have gone by, any life acquires an unique character. Every item in it is a matter of interest to the descendent who looks back to you with interest, curiosity and perhaps a touch of affection.

What I am trying to do is this, have you cooperate with me in seeing to it that some McComas, or McComases, in the year 2050 A. D. may possess these pages, that I have acquired, plus the numerous entries that may fill in between 1950 and 2050.

See to it that you do your part. Then persuade your children to keep this torch lighted and handed down the generations.

That has been my ambition in poking around among the old documents and records for the last two years. It has been my constant hope that some "Dear Descendent" in the middle of the next century may have his imagination kindled by the long line of men and women who have gone before him.

To start this enterprise going I am going to ask my cousin Winona McComas to gather the material concerning her three brothers. The children of the first son of the old Sea Captain.

I am going to ask my cousin Harry Turner to collect the material about his brothers and sisters, the children of "little Bell" the "Darling" in the old Captain's letters.

That leaves the material concerning the children of "Little Clay" to my sisters and myself. I am hereby asking them to make their contributions about themselves.

Since my brother died some 20 years ago it seems incumbent upon me to supply my recollections of him.

Oliver Parker McComas was born in 1871 in the large and luxurious home of his grandfather, Oliver A. Parker. Everyone knows how easy it is for grandparents to enjoy their grandchildren. This must have been especially true in those days for both grandparents were very kindly and very affectionate. My grandfather seemed to have a special pride in, and affection for his namesake. There are numerous instances that indicate this. Throughout his life my grandfather loved to romp with children. Here is a family secret. On one occasion the old gentleman lifted his namesake and sat him on his head; and that was just the moment when the baby wanted to go to the rest room and not sit on his grandfather's head. This little "contretemps" did not affect the affection of the old gentleman. All of his life he maintained a deep interest in his namesake; who resembled him very much. Both were six feet tall rather slender and with clear blue eyes.

My first memory of my brother was his returning home from

school one winter day with a blue scarf around his neck. I called mother's attention to the fact that his eyes and the scarf were the same color. He was then ten years old and I was six.

This difference of four years had a great influence upon our relations with each other. Throughout boyhood I was simply a "kid" in his eyes, really too young to notice. Usually he did not notice me. The family noticed things about both of us. I was always in trouble, he seemed to be immune. Also, the school reports showed a shocking difference,- not to my advantage. He was tall and people spoke of him as handsome. I never reached over five feet eight and in 75 years I have never encountered the adjective "handsome". Naturally, there was always some friction between these brothers, often it broke out into a flame. Usually, there was a sort of restless truce interrupted by open battle. There was a period of peace when I was twelve and he sixteen. This happened because we were spending a summer in the country and we both had bicycles. These were known as "high-wheels", a large wheel in front, a small one in the rear and the saddle perched up about a foot above the high wheel. Going at eight miles an hour a stone the size of your thumb would cause a "header". These resulted in anything from a skinned forehead to broken bones. Now and then somebody got killed. My brother's wheel was 60 inches in diameter and when he took a "header" he jarred the earth. I admired his courage a great deal but never admitted it.

Naturally he was a youngster who had all sorts of friends, among them some very pretty girls.

I well remember when he finished his schooling and started in the business course at Bryant and Stratton. Father made it clear that he expected Ollie to pass the course in the least possible time. He did. Then his first job was at the Third National Bank. About this time he began to step out and enjoy life, and the same thing happened to him that happened to his father. He was taken into the coal business. He was given training in every phase of it. When his father died in 1917 he took over the management and introduced some much needed innovations. He carried the business through the stormy period of the first World War. From my own experience with this same business I can testify that it is a hard gruelling grind. He found some outlet in joining the Masonic Order and engaging in mechanical and free hand drawing at home.

Shortly after he began to earn a good salary in the coal business he ran off and married Elizabeth McClymont; whose family tree, also, ran back to the Highlands of Scotland. That was not the reason he married her. She had the most gorgeous blue eyes and curly, black hair and a great love of humor. Like those stalwart pioneers of two centuries ago, they brought eight children into the world. As one might expect everyone of them had their parents blue eyes and a penchant for seeing the amusing side of things.

I have always thought that my brother had all the ability to attain a distinguished career. His bitterest enemy was John Barleycorn. We have seen that for four generations before his the male members of the McComas clan had their own intimacies with J. B.

In the Scriptures we read about a prodigal son. After engaging in all sorts of enterprises, at last, "he came to himself". After wandering all over the family-tree I have at last come to myself.

In writing the following sketch I have two things in mind. The first is I should like to have my descendents in 2050 feel that they know something about the member of the family who concocted this "Saga". Secondly, I want to try an experiment. In attempting to know the men and women who lived a hundred, and two hundred years, before my times; I have consulted all the old records, documents and papers that I could find. From this inanimate material I have tried to read some of the thoughts and feelings that those "old-timers" may have had. Every person has two lives; the outer life which shows the things he says and does and which may be recorded in documents; and an inner life which is comprised of his thoughts and feelings. No one has access to this inner life but God and himself. To really understand the events of his life you must have access to his inner life. In this experiment, my Dear Descendent of 2050, please note

the mistakes anyone can make in trying to understand the real inner life of any man from information obtained about his outer life. I am going to take your year of 2050 and try to look back upon the life of one Henry Clay McComas born 1875, died some where around the middle of the 20th Century. His times yield a great number of documents that should be available for sketching his life. I am going to assume that you find at least the documents I shall mention and then that you draw some rather obvious inferences. After that is done I shall take you behind the scenes and explain what was going on in my mind when I played my role.

As a starting point you would naturally get your first material from "Who's Who" and "American Men of Science". Using these as cues you would naturally use newspapers, college records and, if possible, the records of private schools in Baltimore; to fill out your material on the boyhood period. After you had gotten as much data as possible, from the remainder of your material, to interpret this period; I think you would draw some such inferences as these. This boy went from one private school to another almost every year, and his marks were very bad. One might infer from that that he was an exceptionally stupid boy. That inference isn't justified since we find him later winning a scholarship in Harvard University before taking his Ph.D., there. That would indicate that the boy was not stupid, but simply would not study. Why? The simplest explanation is that he disliked study and preferred

the usual activities of a growing boy. In other words he was an extrovert who preferred to be doing things; not an introvert, who finds satisfaction in the quiet life of the student.

For some reason this poor student went to the University of Virginia where he studied Greek, Geology, Physics and Biology. Perhaps the reason for this most peculiar selection is that these may have been rather easy courses and he could enjoy college life without carrying much of a burden.

However, after one year in the University of Virginia, he appears at the Johns Hopkins University as a special student, and specializes in an unusual combination, - History and English. These are not difficult courses and we might continue to infer that he is still picking out work that does not involve too much study. But we cannot hold to that inference because the records show that he gradually passed off all of his entrance requirements, while taking his college courses. That means nearly two years work woven in with the college work. Something seems to be happening at this period of his development. By his senior year he had covered so much of his college requirements that he had time for an extra course. He took Hebrew. The selection of this subject (plus our other, and later material) indicates that he was now planning to go into the Ministry; so we may infer that at some time prior to this that religious strain, which appears here and there in the family tree, was making itself felt.

After graduating from the Hopkins in 1897 he went to

New York and studied at Columbia University and the Union Theological Seminary. At the latter he is listed as taking a special course. In Columbia he studied History, Sociology and Hebrew. At this point we may draw an important inference. This young man simply will not take the regular courses in any Institution. That could mean only one thing, he has no definite plan and is quite confused about what he wishes to learn. However, the old disposition to escape study and lead an active life has about disappeared. Nevertheless, we do find his name listed for taking boxing lessons in the Columbia gymnasium.

After taking his Master's Degree in Columbia, 1898, and graduating from Union in 1900 he appears in Trinity Congregational Church, in North Attleboro, Mass.; in the Fall of 1900. From the "Attleboro Chronicle" we read that a few months after arriving there he started a movement for establishing a sort of a Y.M.C.A. in the town. Can this mean anything else than that we have to do with a thorough-going extrovert? Here is a young man who has just started in the ministry, with a small and struggling church, but he cannot hold himself to his religious duties; but must enjoy the activities of organizing a new enterprise. About a year after the organization had been established he accepted a call to Cadillac, Michigan.

Here his history repeats itself. First, he organizes a gymnasium in the church annex, then gets the wealthy men in his congregation interested and finally succeeds in having a Y.M.C.A. built that cost about $60,000.

At this period there is a peculiar shift in his career. After four years, in one of the best churches of Michigan, he suddenly disappears and shows up at Harvard University doing research work in the psychological laboratory under Professor Munsterberg. After two years graduate work we find him as an instructor in Princeton. Then in 1900 he has completed his thesis "Some Types of Attention" and takes the Ph.D. degree. After a few years in Princeton he writes a book entitled "The Psychology of the Religious Sects". This book would indicate that although he had shifted his activities from the church to scientific work in the laboratory he still retains an interest in religion. A few years later the first World War broke out and we find him a Captain in the Sanitary Corps; stationed, first, at the flying field on Long Island, and then at Taylor Field near Mobile in Alabama. His book "The Aviator" which appeared in 1922, and was translated into Russian in 1926, shows that his work consisted in devising experiments to select the best type of young man capable of flying; and, also, experiments to show what effect flying at an altitude of four miles may have upon the aviator. After the War the records show that he was teaching a course in social psychology, attended by some 280 students.

Perhaps, some inferences may be made from the above material. Here is a man who does not seem to be able to adjust

himself to the quiet study of a clergyman. That extrovert nature leads him to an experimental laboratory and then into the Army where he can build expensive apparatus and take lessons in flying. Perhaps, this interpretation will explain the next abrupt shift in his career; for he leaves Princeton and goes to Baltimore, in 1927, to become president of a coal company, and 1930 he appears as a president of the Baltimore Coal Exchange. Nevertheless, some of his other interests seem to persist for he appears as a lecturer in psychology at the Johns Hopkins University from 1928 to 1936. In addition to that, the penchant for public speaking, inherited from sermons and lectures, shows itself in connection with the Colston Lee Lecture Bureau, over a period of three years. During this time his name appears in various papers as a lecturer to different organizations in a number of cities.

One curious item is this, in 1935 he publishes a book "Ghosts I Have Talked With", which was later translated into Czechoslovakian. The material for that was obtained when he was a special research officer of the American Society for Psychic Research, at a time when he was enjoying "Sabbatical Year" at Princeton.

This last entry supplies a good cue to the life of this individual. Here we have a man with an active temperament who feels so strongly the urge of a religious nature that he forces himself into careers for which he was not adapted by nature. Of course, the result had to be a lot of confusion

throughout his life. This shows itself in the confusion in selecting courses preparatory to his career. Certainly, it shows itself in the curious contrasts in the activities in which he engaged. From the books that he wrote and the various magazine articles and the reports of public lectures it would seem that he was often deadly in earnest but just as often intrigued by the amusing phases of his subject.

At this point I shall ask leave to do some interpreting from the point of view of this subject's inner life.

The interpretation of 2050 that, in my boyhood, I was an atrocious student and had to have a plenty of activity is quite correct. At the age of seven I was riding a high-wheel, at eight I was brought home with a broken bone in my foot, after a fight in which a large stone was dropped on me. The neighbors never loved me. I shot sparrows with an air rifle and occasionally took out a window pane. The stone-fight with the boys from across Jones Falls satisfied everything I could desire. I tried to construct all sorts of things,- anything to be doing something, anything to have some excitement. Often mother would say "Whenever I hear a noise in the street I feel sure that it is Harry being carried home on a shutter."

This sort of thing went on until the fall of the year 1888, then I went to school taught by a very remarkable Englishman, Mr. Harry Penn. Never had I encountered anyone like him. He seemed to be informed upon every subject. He read French

and German, and, also, Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Add to those accomplishments the fact that he understood boys and joined them on the playground of his school and you have the picture of a man who could make a very strong impression upon a boy in his beginning adolescence. His outstanding characteristic was his religion. School opened every morning with a reading of the Scriptures. During my first year we read the Old Testament,- Mr. Penn reading it in the original Hebrew and commenting here and there. During the second year we read from the New Testament, Mr. Penn reading from the original Greek. Something about the Bible intrigued me and I began reading it at home. I can remember that by the Christmas of that first year at Mr. Penn's school I left a party at my grandfather's house, Christmas night, to slip home and read my Bible. In those days it was believed that the Bible had been inspired by God. Those who wrote it did so in the same way that a secretary would write what was dictated to him. Of this I was thoroughly convinced. My reading brought about an astonishing experience. It seemed to me that I had suddenly discovered the Infinite Being, who lived in all the vast spaces of the Universe. To me He was not a vague, philosophical conception. By no means; He was a living being, more real than those who lived around me. I could communicate with Him at any time in a silent prayer, and it was my conviction that He communicated with me. Thus, I became a sort of a mystic. The most outstanding feature of this strange experience was that I conceived a profound affection for this personal God. In my conception that He entered directly into

my thoughts and feelings was involved the idea that in some way I must share something of His nature.

The result of this was two-fold; my thoughts must now break away from the trivial interests of my boyhood and I must begin to study.

The second effect is somewhat hard to explain, it involves the emotional nature. I experienced a remarkable feeling of elation. The whole world seemed wonderfully fine to me. Now, I took a pleasure in things that never interested me before. I began to really enjoy music and took lessons on the violin. I would slip away and walk out into the country to enjoy a sunset, all alone, but with the God I loved. Even at this late age I can look back, after years of scientific work, to the peace of mind, contentment and happiness of that young convert. I am not doing justice to the emotional side of that experience. At college, I compared my experience with that of a friend, who had had quite a similar experience. We agreed that the quality of the emotion, that arose from the religious experience, was very much like that one has when he listens to a wonderful piece of music. We both agreed that the religious experience was stronger and more satisfying. We were both convinced that it was the direct result of contact with the Infinite Father.

This sort of an experience made a complete change in my outlook upon life. My interests were now upon lines that I thought would please my God. As for the emotional experience, it was so profound that it completely overwhelmed the things

that ordinarily boys of my age would enjoy. So there was a sort of reconstruction in my entire make-up. My experience was the most valuable thing that I possessed and it also seemed to me that it had changed me from a reckless and thoughtless youngster into one who was resolved to make a good use of his life. That being so, in my case, why should I not lead other people to have the same experience; to enjoy life in a new and wonderful way and to turn their efforts into some useful directions. Following that idea I decided to become a minister.

It is this upheaval in my life which gives the cue to everything that followed. My first problem was to graduate from college. That meant a very serious change in my habits. I was far behind my age in my studies. I was determined to enter college at the usual age of seventeen. I could not pass any of the examinations for any college so I went to the University of Virginia, where no entrance examinations were required. That curious selection of studies has a simple explanation. The Greek was to enable me to read the New Testament in the original. The three sciences were selected because the God whom I worshipped was very real. He showed Himself in the Universe that He had created, therefore, an excellent way of understanding Him would be to acquire a first hand acquaintance with this Universe, by means of the various sciences. However, it did not work out that way. The more I became acquainted with the laws of science the less did any God seem to have to do with this Universe.

Then at the age of 18 came the first serious questioning about the existence of any God at all, and the meaning of a religious experience. I became quite an honest atheist. By the time I had entered the Hopkins, I had an entirely new set of conceptions. No longer was the Bible the Word of God, it was a collection of books written by various men at various times, some of them with the genius for religion that Aristotle had for science. Evolution, the subject that gave most trouble, was simply the plan with which God worked. I was not altogether sure of my reasoning. Of one thing, however, I was confident, that such a religious experience as I had had was something of a supernatural character and that it had had such an enormous value for me that it should have a great value for other people. That determined me to continue in my preparation for the ministry.

The fact that I took a special course at the Hopkins was not due to any confusion, but it was the outcome of entering without any examinations. I had to take a special course. Again the special course at Union was to enable me to take courses at Columbia. There is no confusion about it. The work of organizing Y.M.C.A.s in North Attleboro and Cadillac was not due to any extrovert urge. Both towns needed such institutions very badly; and I felt it was a duty to see that they got started.

Now that shift from the pulpit to the laboratory, from trying to induce people to have my sort of religious experience

to scientific experiments in psychology. The cue is to be found not in the urge of an extrovert to lead an active life. The cue lies in the boyhood experience and the selection of sciences at the University of Virginia. By 1907 there was a number of studies in the psychology of religion. These seemed to indicate that the religious experience had a natural explanation, that there was no supernatural factor in it. That lead me to doubt the genuineness of the work in which I was engaged. I determined to make a thorough-going study of psychology to satisfy my mind. To do this I entered Harvard and began with the fundamentals of the science and then went on to research work. By the time I had taken my degree I had found no adequate answer to the puzzle; so I gladly accepted an appointment at Princeton. The book on the "Psychology of Religious Sects" represents one effort to explain the varieties of religious experiences in a scientific way.

The work in the Army does reflect an urge of an extrovert. It was delightful to get away from the academic atmosphere and sail around in a "Jennie" over the flying field on Long Island. That book on "Ghosts" was an interesting attempt in explaining the phenomena of psychic research. From the book you cannot learn that I entertained a hope, that in all this medley of curious things, there might be some one thing that would have to be classed as supernatural. I did. There wasn't.

What about that other abrupt shift from the laboratory

to the coal business?" Well perhaps there was some extrovert urge in that, but a somewhat more obvious explanation lies in the fact that I had a fight with the president of the University and though I could have continued on as an Associate Professor I could look for no further promotion for some years. I was glad to escape. My connection with the Hopkins reflects the thorough-going interest in psychology and the old persistent hope that that science could tell something about the religious experience.

Some data that you may not be able to get a hold of in 2050,- I have recently finished a book entitled "Chemical Bases of Moods and Emotions". I hope to get it published, in 1950, but I can't get any publisher to take it. In this I seek to find some of the physiological bases of the emotions. It throws some light on religious emotions, but not enough. Now in my 75th year I am collecting material for a book on modern science and religion. I may never find a publisher for it. I don't know. You will.

So you see, Descendent of 2050, the cue to this life was in a strange boyhood experience, and that sort of thing does not appear in any documents. However do not be discouraged. Some of your inferences were very well made.

Now here are some items that you may not find available in 2050 A.D. I fell in love with a girl by the name of Edith Rosalie Gates when I was 16 years old. I was engaged to her when I was 17 and I married her when I was 21. More remarkable than that we have lived happily together through 53

years to the present hour. I have needed her very badly from the time that I was trying to get into the University of Virginia up to the present hour when I am trying to write this "Saga". She never fails me. At that time when I was struggling to acquire an ability to concentrate my mind upon studies she patiently and persistently spurred me on. She has always sympathized with me in all the curious things I have tried to do, from taking out patents to hunting ghosts. Lucky for me she has a very alert mind. Her father Dr. William Gates was a dentist and invented a drill, which became known over the country at the "Gates drill". Her brother Dr. William E. Gates became very well known from his publications on the Mayan civilization. So, she was always interested in literature, and did a little writing herself. She has given her life to helping me. In that first church that I held she was invaluable. She ran our little house, cooked all the meals, visited the parishioners, and on Sunday she taught Sunday School, sat through the morning service, conducted Chinese Sunday School in the afternoon, attended Christian Endeavor and evening service and then hurried home to get me something to eat. It was while we were living in that little New England town that we had and lost our only child.

As we in the year 1950 try to imagine what life in 2050 may be like we can conceive of a very great number of changes and improvements. We cannot conceive that by that time you will be able to obtain anything better than a genuine love that can sustain a couple for fifty years.

1950

In this last chapter of our Saga I am going "to hang up the fiddle and the bow" and beg my living relatives "to take down the shovel and the hoe". They know all about themselves and the dates that are important. They know what interested them in their ancestors. They know what will interest their descendants in the year 2050 A.D. I am urging them to use the loose leaves they will find after this chapter to enter a record of their loved ones. How well they do their job and pass it down the years, my dear Descendant of 2050 A.D. you will know. Not I.

I am entering a few boughs, branches, and twigs of the family tree for the eleven generations. This will serve as a cross reference, a century hence, to show the connections between the McComases of today. (See chapter on Family Tree)

In the chapters preceding we have always found the military careers of the men exceptionally interesting. In the century to follow this one, surely the efforts of the family in the two World Wars will prove interesting. Possibly the Wars of the 21st century may be even more exacting on the men who shall endure them than the Wars in our time. It certainly seems that our recent wars have demanded more of our young men than the earlier wars.

In the wars of the past, it seems that the time they arrived in relation to the age of the men in our family determined whether the man entered the service. In the Revolution the McComases in Harford County entered the Army at 16 years of

age on up to around 45. Apparently the older men dropped out of the Army after a short service.

In the first World War relatively few of us who were descended from the old sea captain were of an age to join. I believe I was the oldest (42) and was allowed to enlist since my work was the application of laboratory technique to problems in Aviation. I served at Hazelhurst Field in New York and at Taylor Field, Alabama, as a Captain in the Sanitary Corps. My assignment was to devise tests to determine what type of young man could make an aviator and, also, to study the behavior of the aviator when he had been flying at high altitudes and was suffering from oxygen starvation.

My brother, Oliver P. McComas, had two boys who were of an age to enlist and they did so. The elder, Parker McComas, left Princeton where he was doing graduate work in English. He entered the Infantry as a Second Lieutenant, was promoted to First and cited for courage in action. He went through several gruelling engagements in France and was hospitalized for Spanish Flu. The younger son, Donald, chose the Navy. He was a happy go lucky youngster and to my eyes he made a typical "tar". Though his ships did not get into any active engagements his description of life below decks in a storm leads me to believe he underwent a pretty strenuous nervous strain. At all events he suffered from nervous disorders until the time he died at 27. The youngest son, Clay, was much too young for the First World War but entered the Second as a Private. He broke down under the strain and has not at this date yet recovered.

My sister, Mrs. Carrie McComas Wampole, had one son, Albert, a care free youngster some six feet four inches tall and like his cousin he went into the Navy in the Second World War. He received some very strenuous training but did not see any battle service.

A great grandson of Captain Henry Gough McComas was the fourth member of the family to bear that name. He entered the Service as a First Lieutenant and was in the Ordinance Department for fourteen months. Then he was promoted to Captain as a Transportation Officer, - shipping lend-lease materials to England and Russia. Was promoted to rank of Major and sent to the Philippines, Oct. 1946, in charge of all the Maintenance Inspectors for that region. He had to take inspection tours to Okinawa and Japan. His son, the fifth Henry Gough McComas, enlisted in the Air Corps in December 1943, was shipped to Australia in 1944 and served in the campaign up through the Islands of the Pacific. He was stationed at Los Negros on the Admiralty Islands for 14 months, - primary duty evacuating wounded by air. Went on up through Leyte, the Philippines and Japan. He was discharged as a Corporal in February 1946. His brother, George, also enlisted in the Air Force. He entered in July 1945 and after training in Biloxi, Miss. he was sent to France and proceeded with the Army of Occupation into Germany.

Wilson, the younger son of Henry Gough McComas III took his basic training at Miami, Florida for the Air Corps and was assigned duties here in the States.

Turning now to the sons of Norris McComas (another grandson of the old sea captain) all of them were in the Second World War, excepting Cardiff who was over age. William E. was stationed at Aberdeen, Md. where very important work was carried on in testing all types of explosives and ordinance. After the War he was sent to Germany to inspect German equipment and to learn any new devices the Germans may have been using.

Cary, the second son of Norris, was in a number of the most famous operations of the War in Africa and Italy. The following are the major campaigns in which he participated and for which he is entitled to wear stars on the campaign bars for that theater of operation. (1) The prevention of evacuation of enemy troops at Cape Bon and Bizerte, Tunisia. (2) The invasion and occupation of Sicily. (3) The invasion and leap frog landings on small islands off the North Coast of Siciliy. (4) The invasion of Italy and landing operations at Salerno Bay. (5) The landing operations at Anzio Beach Head. (6) The invasion and landing on the Island of Elba. (7) The invasion and occupation of Southern France approximately August 14th, 1944. In September his unit was transferred to operations in the Pacific. He landed in the Philippine Islands in July 1945 and went from one small island to another and he was finally stationed at Leyte Harbor until October 1945 when he was sent back to the States. Kenneth, the youngest son of Norris, spent his term in the Army as a Technician, working on the Maintenance of heavy equipment.

Unluckily he got side-tracked into places where no active engagements occurred. He was stationed, first, at Fort Buchanon, then at San Juan, Porto Rico, and then at Saint Thomas in the Virgin Islands.

The third son of George W. McComas and his name sake, had no boys to send to the War, but his two daughters selected husbands who more than made up for this condition of things. Jane K. McComas married John M. Williams who had the distinction of being one of the men in the famous 19th Army Corps which entered France over the famous Omaha Beach and made the great drive toward St. Lo. He was wounded July the 9th, for which he received his bronze star, valor award. He was wounded again July 30th, in Brittany. In all he participated in four campaigns in Europe, Normandy, Northern France, Rhine-land and Central Germany.

Mary McComas married Alan W, Long. He enlisted in the Maryland National Guard, A.C. in 1939, and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in Sept. '40. About each year thereafter he was promoted, and was commissioned Lt. Colonel Dec. '45. In all he had 876 combat flying hours,- in bombing missions against Japanese naval and land bases, and in supporting landings in New Guinea, Owi, Bide, Leyte, Mindoro, Lingiyan Gulf, Manila, Cebu, Los Negros, Zamboango, Parang and Tarakan in Barneo. On Apr. 15, 1943 he was awarded the War Department Air Medal, and on Oct. 10, 1944 the Purple Heart,- and in addition to these, the Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters and the Bronze Star Medal.

[illegible]

The third son of [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

ADDENDA

There seemed to be no place in the preceding chapters for some interesting things that relate to the family tree but whose connections with it I cannot discover. A few days ago I received a letter from a Mrs. Ella McComas in Shiner, Texas, inquiring about McComases bearing the name of Frank and Walter. I have no names of that sort on the tree. So I could not help. However it is certain that some branches of the tree reach down into Texas. In the genealogical library in Washington I find the name scattered throughout the country. Possibly these names do not belong among the descendants of old Daniel McComas. We know that there was a Richard McComas born in Ireland in 1817 and he came to this country as a young man settling in Ohio. He had two grandsons who were Captains in our Army in the First World War. So it is no longer possible to be sure of the descendants of the Irish and American branches of the family. Apart from this, the natural growth of the family in America would lead us to think that its members must be scattered everywhere. Back in the 18th century there were the names of many a McComas who apparently disappeared from Harford county as the names did not show up in the early censuses.

To close these reflections with the account of one vivid and spectacular McComas whose place on the family tree I have not yet discovered I shall quote from an article in "True Magazine" by Paul I. Wellman, "The White Apache".

[illegible]

There seemed to be [illegible] for some interesting [illegible] had shown [illegible] Texas, [illegible] of the [illegible] library [illegible] the country. [illegible] War. So it is no longer possible [illegible] of the [illegible] this, [illegible] us to [illegible] Early in the 19th century [illegible]

[illegible]

In the year 1883 Judge H. C. McComas of the Federal Court in New Mexico was travelling by buckboard from Silver City to Leitendorf, a mining camp near Lordsburg. With him were his wife and his six year old son Charley. In Thompson's Canyon near the Gila River there were 26 Apaches led by a certain "Chato". The Judge was killed shortly after he leaped from the buckboard trying to stand off the Indians long enough for his wife to escape. His body was found with seven bullets in it. The buckboard had travelled less than 50 yards when one of the horses was shot and Mrs. McComas was clubbed to death. The little boy Charley was gone.

For a number of days an extensive hunt covered the territory for miles but the only information acquired was from some captured Apache squaws who stated that Charley McComas had been in their camp before the soldiers attacked it but he had disappeared. They intimated that he was either killed or had wandered off into the mountains and died.

So in the year 1883 he disappeared. Then in the year 1923 a prospector by the name of John Hughes saw a file of Apache Indians in a remote pass in the inexcessible Esqueio Mountains. They were led by a white man who was burned by the sun until he was nearly as brown as an Indian but he had a flaming red beard. This suggested to some of the old timers the possibility that Charley McComas might still be alive.

In the year 1930 a Mormon by the name of Moroni Finn led an attack on an Apache camp and recovered some of the horses

In the year 1883 Judge H. C. McComas [illegible] of the District Court in New Mexico was [illegible] from Silver City to Lordsburg, [illegible]. With him were his wife and [illegible] in Thompson's Canyon [illegible] by a party of "Bronco" [illegible] [illegible] from the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

Four [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] had disappeared. [illegible] [illegible].

In in the year 1885 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

In the year [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of which he had been robbed. The most interesting discovery however was the finding of some old brass shells used in the Springfield rifles by the Army in the 1880s. They showed evidence of having been reloaded many times. Several years later a captured Apache squaw told how a white man had lived with her tribe for many years ever since he was captured by Chato's Band in its final campaign. His Apache name was "Red Beard". He was highly esteemed as a great hunter and fighter and for his strength, endurance and fierceness. He was killed when he was about 60 years of age. To check on this story a physician exhumed the skeleton of Red Beard and declared that the bones were those of a white man approximately 60 years old. The old Apache squaw's story ends with a climax that some McComases may not like. He was killed fighting with another chief over a woman,- and this at 60 years of age.

THE McCOMASES OF IRELAND

A letter I received from Mrs. H. M. Claude McComas, 25 Sidney avenue, Blackhead, Dublin, Eire, dated February 8th 1950 contained an elaborate family tree of the McComases in Ireland from 1700 A.D. to the present. Accompanying this was a miscellany of papers, notes, memoranda, letters, etc. from which an idea concerning at least some of the members of the family could be obtained. The most important letter was from the Reverend Thomas M. Fahey, Annaduff Rectory, Drumsna, County Leitrim, Eire, dated 10, 12, '19. I assume it was sent to a Mr. Archibald McComas, of Dublin, since he was collecting material for a family history for years before he died. His widow Kathleen kept it until she died and then a niece, Mrs. Violet Fox took it (I believe). In addition to the Reverend Fahey's letter there are two large sheets of notes containing a great deal of information.

From all of these papers it is possible to make a sort of a sketch of the McComas line in Ireland from the time the first Highlander came over from Sutherland to the children of today.

As I unravel it all, it comes out about like this: a John McComas appeared in Ireland about 1700 A.D. He obtained a rich farm called "Deneen" of 150 acres near Lake Allen in County Leitrim. It was a lake about five miles long and two miles wide and lay South and East of the farm. North and West of the level farmland around the lake lay the low picturesque mountains of North Ireland.

"Deneen" was to the McComases of Ireland what "Gresham's Colledgë" was to the McComases of America.

This farm was a part of 7,000 acres taken from the Irish after the battles in Ireland between William of Orange and James II, and given to the followers of Colonel Josias Campbell. Colonel Campbell had been a Lieutenant in General Hugh McKay's regiment of Scotch Highlanders. McKay came from Scourie and the Gunn clan lived nearby. Among these Highlanders there was undoubtedly the John McComas who was rewarded with "Deneen". The Colonel was a strict Presbyterian and built a kirk at Drumsna where he worshipped with his Highlanders. He died and was buried in the kirk yard.

John's name however appears in the vestry records in 1737 of the Episcopal church in the parish of Annaduff. He is listed as a warden in the church. In 1737 he had a son, Archibald, who followed him at "Deneen" and who was also a vestryman in the church. John died in 1765 and Archibald in 1812.

Note a curious parallel between the two lines of McComases.

John had a son in 1737, our ancestor, Daniell had a son in 1735. Daniell also had a son who followed his father's example in becoming a vestryman. Both John and Daniell died in 1765. The two sons died within three years of each other.

Both lines of the family brought the same coat of arms with them from Scotland.

Both lines had very large families at the beginning of the 18th century and these have become progressively smaller until the present.

With the beginning of the 19th century the young men on the farms both in County Leitrim and in Harford County became

restless and went out to seek their fortunes in the cities of Dublin and Baltimore. In Ireland William McComas (1771-1843) became a distinguished dry goods merchant in Dublin. He built and endowed the "Institute" in Kingston. In America William McComas (1793-1859) went to Baltimore and made a fortune. He also was a dry goods merchant. His son established an Institute for the freed negro slaves in 1867.

In Ireland Samuel McComas (1809-1877) went as a poor boy from Drumsna to Dublin. As a youth he has been reported to have been converted by John Wesley. He became a pillar of Methodism in Dublin. Also he became a very well-to-do merchant, in the dry goods line. In America Zaccheus McComas (1791-1854) was converted to Methodism when he was a mere boy. In his old age he wrote a book "A Treatise On Christianity". He too was successful as a merchant and at one time had a dry goods store in Baltimore.

In the Wars that shook the World in the first half of the 20th century both branches of the family sent their young men into their country's service both as privates and officers.

It would seem that the sturdy nature developed by living for generations in the hardships of the Scotch Highlands and by intermarrying with the same type of stalwart people, resulted in a family line that showed similar traits of character in both Ireland and America.

I II III

Generations of the
McComas Family in
IRELAND

John
McComas
B.1700(?)
D. 1765
of →
"Deneen"
County
Leitrim
IRELAND

Archibald
McComas
B.1737. →
D. 1812
+
Jane Nutley
B.- D. 1806

Jane
B. 25 Dec. 1765

Thomas
b. 24 June 1767
D. 26 Dec. 1793
+
Susannah Mahon
B. 6 Aug. 1769

Thomas and
Susannah
had →
Ten Children

(see P. 2)

Eliza
B. 29 Mar.1769
D. 4 Jan.1826(?)

William
B. 3 May 1771
D. 2 May 1843
+
Lydia Crowther (1800)
+
Mary Jones (1811)
B. 1774 D. 1780

William & Lydia
had
Four Children

(see P. 5)

William and
Mary had →
Four Children

(See p. 5)

Catherine
B. 7 May 1776
D. 17 May 1804
+
McMahon

Samuel

Ann
+
Richard Litton

IV Generation

The Ten Children of
Thomas and Susannah

Mary Ann
B. 26 Dec. 1796
D. 20 Sept. 1797

Archibald
B.27 Feb. 1797
D. 1818

James
B. 24 Nov. 1798
D. 16 Feb. 1802

Jane
B. 16 May 1800
D. 6 Feb. 1877
+
Geo. Maguay

Thomas
B. 11 June 1802
D. 17 Sept. 1827

Catherine
B. 22 July 1804
D. "in New York"
+
James Proud

Susannah
B. 28 Feb. 1806
D.28 Sept. 1867
+
Williams
+
Richard Corby

John
B. 4 May 1807
D. 1 June 1807

William
B. 24 April 1808
D. 17 Nov. 1827

Samuel
B. 24 Oct. 1809
D.28 Jan. 1877
+
Jane Simms (1829)
B. - D. Feb. 24, 1800

Samuel & Jane
had Three
Children

(See P. 3)

V Generation

The Three Children of
Samuel & Jane

VI Generation
The Six Children of Thomas & Harriot

Thomas
B. 13 Aug. 1830
D. 17 Aug. 1888
+
Harriot Mallinson
B. 9 Feb. 1830
D. Mar. 1922

had

Alice Lavinia
B. 13 June 1854

John Ernest
B. 6 April 1860
D. 6 July 1888

Clara Beatrice
B. 6 Mar. 1858 D. Mar. 1899

Helen Maud
B. 22 Feb.1862
D. 11 Mar.1839
+
Arthur Foy (1887)
B. Jan. 1863
D. June 1949

Helen & Arthur
had Three →
Children
(See P. 4)

Ada Kathleen
B. Apr. 8, 1864
D. June 28, 1949

Percy Herbert
B. July 1868
D. -

Percy & Norah
had Two Children
→
(See P. 4)

Norah Francis
B. 6 May 1878

John Robert
B. 17 Aug. 1832
D. Oct. 1859
"In Melbourn"

Samuel and Elizabeth had 7 children

Samuel
B. 5 July 1842
D. 11 Feb. 1904
+
Elizabeth Brown (Aug.1870)
B. 15 Nov. 1850

had

Jane May
B. 21 May 1821
+
Alec Fullerton
B. 19 Dec. 1873

Three Children
(See P. 4) →

Jessie
B. 19 Jan. 1873
+
Johnson

Two Children →

Francis B,Dec.22 1874
+
Johnson

Two Children
(See P. 4)
→

Samuel B.26 May 1877
+
Agnes Long

One Child →

Ethel B.12 June 1879
+
Johnson

Two Children
(See P. 4)
→

Elinor May B.8 May 1882

William Arthur
+
Phillis Weir

One Child →
(See P. 4)

The Three children of
Helen Maud & Arthur Foy

Dorothy Agnes
B. 11 Jan. 1889
D. 28 Aug. 1898

Helen Beatrice
B.7 April 1891

Violet May
B. 24 Aug. 1902

The Two Children of
Percy and Norah

Herbert Geofry, had three children:- Sally, Patrick, Jeremy
B. 1907

Norah Joyce
B. 9 Jan. 1909

The Three Children of
Jane and Alec

Alex
Aileen B. 1897
Gordon B. 1900

The Two Children of
Jessie and Johnson
Arthur B. 1904
Phyllis B. 1906

The Two Children of
Francis and Johnson

Dermot B. 1910
Maureen B. 1914

The One Child of
Samuel and Agnes

Muriel B. 1916

The Two Children of
Ethel and Johnson

Harold 1916
Hilda 1918

The One Child of
William and Phillis

Joan Elizabeth B. 1918

IV Generation

The Four Children of
William and Lydia
(continued fr. P. 1)

Mary Ann
B. May 1801
D. July 1854
+
John Barrett (1823)
+
Benj. Mason (1829)

Joseph
B. 28 Feb. 1803
D. Oct. 1826
+
Anne Storey (1826)

Archibald
B. May 1805
D. Apr. 1876 had Six Children (See P. 6A)
+
Jane Jones (July 1836)
B. 1802
D. 25 Nov. 1878

Francis
B. 15 June 1806
D. -
+
Anne Browning (1829)

The Four Children of
William and Mary
(Continued fr. P. 1)

Richard Thomas
B. 26 Dec. 1817
D. 3 July 1892
+
Julia Francis Agar (1839)
B. 1817
D. 1885 "In U.S.A."

John Wesley
B. 12 Nov. 1819 had ten Children (See P. 7)
D. -
+
Jane Abbey (June 1885) "In Dublin"

Lydia
+
John Barrett

Katherine

V Generation	VI	VII
The Five Children of Archibald and Jane (continued fr. P. 5)		
Jane Louise B 1837 D. 1849	Seven Children of Archibald and Caroline	
Wm. Jos. Archibald B. 24 May 1839 D. 25 May 1894 had + Caroline Goodman (1872) D. 1921	Jane Loreta + Moreton Dodd had →	Mauric Eric Alison Clara May
	Herbert William B. 4 Oct. 1877 + Carla Brandeth (1906)	
	Edith Violet B. 19 Jan. 1880	
	Hilda Lilian B. 29 July 1881	
	Grace Irene B . 13 Jan. 1883	
	Bertha Theodora B. Aug. 1886 D. - 1949	
	Eric Basil B. 19 June 1890 D. 19 Nov. 1908	
Chas. E. Archibald B. 29 Nov. 1842 D. 28 Aug. 1917 had + Louisa Goodman B. Aug. 12, 1851 D. May 3, 1892	Six Children of Charles and Louisa	
	Amy Caroline B.1825 D.1881	
	Archibald B. Nov. 1876 had → + Kathleen Folkner (Feb.1906) B. Jan. 1878	Richard B. 1906 Anthony B. 1910 Paula B. 1914
	Constance B. Jan. 1878 + Harold Newstead B. 6 May 1875 had → D. 7 May 1925	Kenneth
	Ada Muriel B. 19 May 1879	
	Butram Charles B. June 1884 D. Sept. 1884	
	Una Violet B. 17 Sept. 1885	

V. Generation	VI	VII
The Five Children of Archibald and Jane. (Continued fr. P. 6A)		
Lydia Marianna B. 3 Dec. 1844 D. 23 June 1845		
	Mabel Christine B. 1875 D. 1946	
	Sybel Francis B. 1876, D.1907	
Richard Henry Archibald B. Sept. 1847 D. Feb. 1819 + Alice Goodman B. 22 Nov. 1849 D. 29 Aug. 1907 had	Edwin Archibald B. 1877 D. 1911 + Mary M. Gibson had	Edwin Alexander 1914 Richard Geoffry 1919 Enid Alice 1908
	Cyril Henry B. Apr. 28, 1885 + Claude Davison Houston (1907) had	Henry Claud 1913
	Rupert B. 1887 + Irma Barrington (1914) had	Mauliffe Greatorex 1916
	Gerald Apr. 2, 1882 + Janet M. Fane (1915) had	Richard Frank 1918
	Olive B. 20 May 1883	
	Reginald B. 1888 + Beatrice Coller (1918)	

V.

The Ten Children of
John Wesley and Jane Addey

Mary Agusta
+
McGowen

Anna Whilhalmina

William Archibald

Isobel Jane

Caroline Elizabeth

Louisa Theodora

John Wesley

Archibald Francis Dick
D. 1891

Richard Bond
+
Ethel Cutts

Wesley

Descendants
of
Daniell Maccomus, died 1699
and
Elizabeth Maccomus

And their four sons:

John, B. 1687 (?), D. 1639
wife Ann. D. 1741

William, B. 1689, D. 1748
wife Hannah (Dever) married 1722

Alexander, B. 1695 (?) D 1760
wife Elizabeth
wife Hannah (Wittacre) married 1728

DANIEL, B. 1697, D. 1765 ⟶
wife Martha (Scott) B. 1716, D. 1786
Married in 1734

- - - -

The line of descent from Daniel and Martha Maccomas to Captain Henry Gough McComas is indicated by CAPITAL LETTERS.

Descendants of Daniel and Martha Maccomas

Daniel, 1721 - 1794
wife Tabitha (Johnson) M. 1743

James, 1735 - 1791 →
wife Elizabeth (Hillen) 1746-1826
M. 1761

Elizabeth 1737 -
husband, Abraham Anderson, M.1785

Aquila

John, 1741 -
wife Mary

Martha 1743 -
husband Robert Amos, M. 1765
husband Parker Gilbert 1797

William 1763

James 1765 - 1794 incorrect!
wife Ann

Josiah 1767

Martha 1771
husband Wm. Dorsey M 1798

Elizabeth 1773
husband - Smith

Susannah 1775
husband - Bradford

Nathaniel 1777
wife Susannah

Mary 1782
husband - Norris

Josias 1785

WILLIAM, 1739-1815 →
wife Elizabeth Scott M. 1760
wife Hannah Onion M. 1785
wife Mary McComas M. 1797

Sarah
husband Wm. Bradford M. 1764
husband Benjamen Anderson M.1799

Mary
husband Patrick Degan,, M. 1799

Hannah

George William 1761 (?)
wife Elizabeth

Thomas Jefferson

Sabra

FREDERICK →
wife Susannah Onion M. 1789

Cassandra Anderson

Cordelia Anderson

Martha

Descendants of Daniel and Martha McComas

WILLIAM 1792-1815
wife Ellen Fort, M. 1815

CAPTAIN HENRY GOUGH 1816-1856
wife Keziah Cunningham 1812-1898
M. 1840

George March 1821 -
Margaritta Witmer M. 1852

William K. 1818 -
wife Eliza Roche M. 1841

Laura Amelia 1825 -
husband D. W. Keyser. M. 1844

Maria Louisa 1831-1857
husband H. B. McClenahan. M. 1853

John Fort 1836-1839

Emily L. 1838-1896
husband Herman Platt. M. 1873

Zacheus Onion 1790 →
wife Susan Fechtig

Frederick C.
wife Catherine
Angle

Henry
wife Hannah
Smith

Joseph P.

Frederick W.

Louis Emory
wife Mary Goodloe

Frederick F.

Susan E.

Henry Gough 1795-1814

Descendants of Daniel and Martha McComas

- George William
  - Henry Gough
    - Henry Gough
    - Elsie
    - Wilson
  - Norris
    - Cardiff
    - William
    - Cary
    - Ellen
    - Kenneth
  - George W
    - Mary
    - Jane
  - Mary Winona

Continued on page 5

- Isabelle
  - John
  - Phillip
  - Harry
  - Cary
  - Charles
  - Edith
  - Elizabeth
- HENRY CLAY
  - Oliver Parker 1871-1927
    wife Elizabeth McClymont 1875-1929
    - O. Parker
    - Donald
    - Elizabeth
    - Marguerite
    - Louis G.
    - Mary Parker
    - H. Clay
  - Mary P. 1873 -
    husband James E. Hewes 1871-1940
    - James E.
    - Clay McC.
    - Madeline
  - Henry C. 1875
    wife Edith R. Gates, M. 1897
  - Carrie F. 1886 -
    husband Albert K. Wampole 1883
    - Betty
    - Marjorie
    - Albert

Continued on page 6

Descendants of Daniel and Martha McComas

Generations from Daniell and Elizabeth Maccomus

Ninth (see P. 4)	Tenth	Eleventh
Henry Gough	Henry Gough	Henry Gough George
	George	
Elsie	Grace	
	James	Sharan Darlene
Wilson	Bonnie Lee Ruth Ann	
Cardiff	George D. Marie E. Caroline A. John R.	
William E.	Delphine	
Kenneth	Jane Louise	
Cary		
Ellen (Shillinger)	Richard Donald Ruth Ann Wayne	
Mary (Long)	Alan W. Susan Elenor W.	
Jane (Williams)	George S. Judith K.	

Descendants of Daniel and Martha McComas

Generations from Daniell and Elizabeth Maccomus

Ninth (See P. 4)	Tenth	Eleventh
O. Parker	Oliver	
	Rhoda	
Donald	Elizabeth (Shipley)	Elizabeth
	Donald	
Elizabeth (Greenwell) (Walker)	Robert	
	Patrick	
	Alice Barbara	Lesley Ann Lindsay Ann
Louis G.	Louis G.	
	Mary Helen	
	Edward	
	Richard Carroll	
Marguerite (Judge)	Joseph	
	Parker	
Mary Parker (Bray)	Marguerite	
	Jaquelin	
	Mary	
H. Clay		
James E.		
Clay McC.		
Madeline		
Mary Elizabeth (Shreve)	Sally Parker	
	Catherine Saunders	
	Elizabeth Wampole	
Marjorie (Gorman)		
Albert		

The Descendants of John and Ann Maccomas

Mary 1713 -

John 1715-1736

Alexander 1721

Mary 1724

Ann 1730
husband John Poteet, M. 1762

Descendants of Alexander by his first wife Elizabeth
and also by his second wife Hannah (Wittacre) Maccomas

Listed in
the church record

Mary 1725 -
daughter of Elizabeth
husband Samuel Whips

Hannah 1730 -

Aquila 1731 -
Sarah Preston M 1752

James
wife Sarah Howard

Alexander

Benjamin

Alexander

Edward Day
wife Mary

Aquilla 1773-
Alexander 1773-

Alexander
wife Susannah

Preston 1789

Nicholas Day
wife Elizabeth Onion

Elizabeth Lytle
Mary
George

Mentioned in Alexander's
last will

Elizabeth
husband John Norris M 1736

Presilla
husband Thos. Scrimmins M. 1753

Sarah Rhodes

Daniel
wife Hannah Tylor. M. 1753

[illegible]

The Descendants of William & Hannah (Dever) Maccomas

Hannah 1723 -
husband Wm. Amos
husband Jacob Miles

Elenor 1725 -
husband - Miles

William 1727-1757

Soloman 1729-

William 1758
Aaron 1761
wife martha

Mary 1763
Hannah 1765

Moses 1731-1794

Daniel 1777-1811 doctor in Bel Air
wife Eliz. Scott, M. 1796

Josias Scott
wife Charity Onion

Martha

Aaron 1734

John - 1736

John Washington
Barnet
Robert

Elizabeth 1717 -
husband - Tredway

(Children by earlier
marriage)
Daniel 1720 -
wife Mary
wife Ann Miles

William 1778 -
Charles 1779 -
wife Mary Gilbert M. 1800
Soloman 1781 -
Hannah 1784
Husband James Maddox

Daniel died 1778

John 1786 -

The Descendants of William & Hannah (Dever) Maccomas

The Children of
Aaron & Martha

- William 1800
  - William
  - Charles
  - Solomon
  - Hannah
  - John
- Jacob 1802
- Soloman 1804
- Micha Gilbert
- Calvel 1807

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